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SCHELLING'S PHILOSOPHY OF RELIGION

EMIL L. FACKENHEIM

Deutlich zu sehen ist in der Philosophie kein Verdienst, wofern die Rede nicht mit der Deutlichkeit Tiefe des Sinns vereinigt. SCHELLING

IN 1841 the philosophical world of Berlin witnessed a remarkable event. The sixty-six year old Schelling emerged from decades of semi-retirement, in order to destroy the philosophy which he himself had founded no less than forty years earlier. He came to overthrow the Hegelian philosophy of religion, which had grown from his own system of identity.

For years extraordinary rumours had been current about the views Schelling supposedly held. Friends and foes alike had urged him to state them in print. But he had failed to do so. One work he had actually withdrawn from the hands of the publisher. Now that he had at last come into the open, the philosophical world prepared itself for a major event. The press took note of it, and everybody flocked to hear the lectures on the Philosophy of Revelation. The audience included the celebrated and the known; it also included some who were as yet unknown, but were to become very well known indeed in subsequent decades—among them Engels, Bakunin, Burckhardt, and, above all, Kierkegaard.

But if the Philosophy of Revelation was a major contribution to religious thought, Schelling's contemporaries were not aware of it. To their vast disappointment, they seemed to be treated to a confused mixture of an idealist system and orthodox Christianity. And they agreed in condemning the mixture. Kierkegaard rejected it in the interests of Protestant theology, while the Hegelians rejected it in the name of systematic philosophy. The latter were particularly outspoken. "A shameful apostasy," cried Michelet, "such as has never been committed in the history of philosophy."[1] And Rosenkranz observed: "It appears that some attach the adjective 'Christian' to a thought, like a fig-leaf, as if they had to be ashamed of it in its nakedness."[2] Nearly everybody was dissatisfied.

Historians of philosophy have agreed with the judgment of Schelling's contemporaries. Indeed, they have created a myth, of that nice and convenient sort found only in histories of philosophy. Schelling, as everybody knows, was a romantic genius. Whoever heard of a

[1] *Entwicklungsgeschichte der neuesten deutschen Philosophie* (Berlin, 1843), 130.

[2] *Schelling* (Danzig, 1843), xxxiv.

romantic genius past the age of thirty? If one is to believe the histories of philosophy, Schelling had exhausted his talents when he was thirty; he spent the remainder of his seventy-nine years mourning his lost genius and envying Hegel.[3] Since nearly everybody does believe the histories, few have bothered to read the *Philosophy of Revelation*. Until today hardly anyone has suspected that it is one of the profoundest works in modern religious thought, equal in importance to the work of Kant, Schleiermacher, and Hegel.

It is indeed a strange fact that the man who published eleven major works before he was thirty should have spent the next thirty years of his life in almost complete literary silence. But this fact is no longer strange if note is taken of the development of Schelling's thought. The young Schelling revels in the new freedom of reason, brought about by Kant and Fichte. The shackles of dogmatism are broken. Reason is no longer tied to mere data outside herself. She can understand the world by the creative development of her own resources. Reason builds up the system of reason. Ten years later Schelling begins to discover facts which the system of reason cannot assimilate. Thus in the very years in which Hegel completes the system, Schelling sees the whole enterprise cast into a crisis. While Hegel rises to fame Schelling withdraws into solitude and silence. In lonely years he wholly rebuilds the foundations of his philosophy. The product of these years is the Philosophy of Revelation, the only significant anti-idealistic philosophy of religion which has grown from the crisis of idealism itself.

II

Among the branches of traditional metaphysics is found a discipline entitled "natural theology." This discipline has the task of proving the existence of God and of understanding whatever reason may be able to understand of His nature. Kant, as is well known, restricts the power

[3]Schelling's behaviour is in part responsible for the treatment he received by the historians. Consider the following testimony of a famous eye-witness: "Hegel's philosophy became dominant . . . and poor Schelling became a mediated philosopher, wandering about sadly in Munich, among all the other mediated philosophers. There I saw him once and almost shed tears at the miserable spectacle. Most miserable of all were his words: envious abuse of Hegel, the man who had supplanted him. Like a cobbler accusing another cobbler of having stolen his leather . . . thus I heard Schelling talk about Hegel. . . . 'He has taken my ideas' . . ., the poor man repeated again and again. Once the cobbler Jacob Boehme talked like a philosopher; now the philosopher Schelling talks like a cobbler." Heinrich Heine, *Die romantische Schule*, in *Sämtliche Werke*, ed. E. Elster (Leipzig und Wien, n.d.) V, 294. Heine was, of course, hardly an unbiased observer. See his *Religion and Philosophy in Germany* (London, 1891), 155. Michelet—not a wholly unbiased reporter either—contrasts Schelling's behaviour with Hegel's reaction to it: "when informed of Schelling's hostile utterances, Hegel shook his head incredulously and observed tactful reserve" (*Entwicklungsgeschichte der neuesten deutschen Philosophie*, 220).

of reason to experience. He thereby eliminates natural theology; the goals which it has set itself are unattainable. But while limiting reason to experience Kant makes its autonomy absolute within this sphere. Nothing within experience escapes its grasp. He thereby establishes a new discipline in place of the discarded natural theology: philosophy of religion. Reason cannot answer the question: Does God exist? It can and must answer the questions: What is religious experience? Is there an *a priori* in religious experience?

The new discipline has the tendency to replace not only natural theology but supernatural theology as well. This latter is based on a divine revelation and the document which records it. No modern thinker quite knows what to do about revelation, for all modern thought is based on the unqualified autonomy of reason. Pre-Kantian philosophers are able to leave the Christian revelation alone, expressing polite if distant esteem. No such cavalier procedure is possible for Kant and his followers. The philosopher now seeks to understand in systematic unity all experience without exception. Among the data of experience is religious experience, which includes the experience of revelation. The philosopher must interpret, not the experience in terms of the revelation, but the revelation in terms of the experience. Thus the authority of revelation gives way to the authority of religious experience, and of reason which is its interpreter. Kant can write: "Each man must make his god according to moral notions . . . there can be no genuine religion on the basis of mere revelation. Without the standard of the ideal of reason, all worship is but idolatry."[4] Fichte is even more explicit: "A complete philosophy embraces the whole system of knowledge. . . . It contains the content of all possible revelation in organic completeness."[5]

Kant has denied the accessibility of a God outside experience. This means to the post-Kantian absolute idealist, not that God is inaccessible, but that He is not outside experience. This development is made possible by a momentous step taken by the young Schelling: the assertion of an absolute identity of experience and reality, of the subject and object of experience. Experience itself is reality, and the absolute experience or consciousness is identical with the absolute reality.

This thesis of identity involves a complete re-interpretation of the meaning of religion. Religion is no longer understood as the attempt of man to relate himself to a God outside himself. It is a self-transformation of finite into infinite spirit; and in the true religious ex-

[4] *Die Religion innerhalb der Grenzen der blossen Vernunft*, ed. C. Vorländer (Leipzig, 1919), 197.
[5] *Nachgelassene Werke*, ed. J. H. Fichte, III (Bonn, 1835), 114.

perience this self-transformation becomes total identification. The true religious experience and the true God are identical. Idealistic philosophy of religion exhibits this identity in systematic form.

On the basis of the thesis of identity, Schleiermacher and Hegel achieve grandiose syntheses of philosophy and theology. Philosophy asserts the autonomy of human reason and experience; theology asserts the autonomy of God and his Word. These two seemingly conflicting claims are now marvellously synthesized. Man himself is the Absolute; but what is absolute in him is not he but the Absolute. God is complete only in man's religious experience; but this experience is only a manifestation of God. The Christian revelation may be reduced to human experience, but only because all human experience is a divine revelation. There is no more magnificent synthesis of philosophy with Christianity than Hegel's *Philosophy of Religion*. But perhaps Kierkegaard was right: perhaps it is for that precise reason the most dangerous attack on Christianity ever made.

It is easy to regard the idealistic philosophy of religion as a gigantic self-delusion and, indeed, as presumption in its supreme form. How can anyone assert that man, even in his most exalted experience, becomes one with God? But instead of dismissing idealistic religious thought, we must understand the reasons which drive it to this conclusion. If Kant is right, then the assumption of a God outside experience, on whatever grounds, is sheer dogmatism. Indeed, it may well be said to be wishful thinking. If God is to become accessible at all, this can be only if religious experience internally proves its own truth and authenticity. But such a proof is not to be achieved by the sort of romantic confession fashionable in Hegel's day; nor is it to be achieved by endorsements of reputable psychologists which are the fashion in our day. Religious experience can prove its own truth only if it reveals itself as the absolute experience. And this means, however it may be put, that there is some point at which man ceases to be finite spirit and becomes identical with absolute spirit. Philosophy simply organizes all experience in such a way as to unite and synthesize it in this absolute point.

Thus the philosophy of religious experience cannot seek refuge from consistency in an arbitrary external standard of truth. If it is to achieve religious truth, it must seek to expand experience from within into an absolute system. But this does of course not mean that it will succeed. It may be that this momentous aim is unattainable, and that the attempt to attain it falls into self-contradiction. And it would then follow that religious truth becomes visible, not in the achievement of the identity sought by idealism, but in the discovery of necessary failure.

The philosophy of religion of Schelling's last period arises from precisely that discovery.

III

In 1809 Schelling writes: "Regarding the problem of freedom, . . . idealism leaves us completely bewildered."[6] He had always been uneasy about the implications of the absolute system for human personality. In the absolute system, freedom can mean only obedience to a higher necessity. And this implication Schelling had always been reluctant to accept. As early as 1795 he had written (I, 1, 306): "The moment a thinker believed he had completed his system he would become intolerable to himself." Fifteen years later he is convinced that the freedom of decision is real, no matter what the consequences for the system. He writes: "The genuine and vital conception of freedom is that it is a possibility of good and evil."[7] But only gradually does Schelling realize that freedom and system are incompatible. Either the absolute identity alone is real, and all separate reality mere appearance; but then freedom too is merely apparent. Or else freedom is real; but then the absolute identity cannot be real, for every free act falls outside it. As to which alternative is the truth Schelling no longer has any doubt. He writes that all freedom is "absolute beginning . . . decision and act" (II, 3, 114).

The problem of freedom gives rise to the problem of evil. In the system of identity, evil as such is appearance. But if freedom is real, and if it is the possibility of choosing between good and evil, then evil is real also. Every free choice of evil shatters the absolute identity, not only because it is free but also because it is evil.[8]

Thus evil, as such, is a threat to the system of identity. This threat is still further aggravated by its actual manifestations. Schelling comes more and more to feel that idealism has taken evil altogether too lightly. In the system of reason, evil is in the end a mere negation. It is either physical only; or else, if spiritual as well, it is a mere means necessary to the attainment of a higher good. Neither of these explanations, Schelling now feels, does justice to the facts. Evil is in its

[6] I, 7, 351. Unless otherwise stated, all quotations refer to the complete edition of Schelling's works, published under the editorship of Schelling's son (Stuttgart and Augsburg, 1856-61). There are competent English translations of Schelling's *Of Human Freedom*, by J. Gutmann (Chicago, 1936), and of *The Ages of the World*, by F. Bolman (New York, 1942).

[7] I, 7, 352; *Of Human Freedom*, trans. Gutmann, 26.

[8] "Either real evil is admitted, in which case it is unavoidable to include evil itself in the infinite Substance or in the Primal Will, and thus totally disrupt the conception of an all-perfect Being; or the reality of evil must in some way or other be denied, in which case the real conception of freedom disappears at the same time" (I, 7, 353; *Of Human Freedom*, trans. Gutmann, 26).

very essence spiritual. It lurks, not in the limitations of the physical, but in the ambiguous and unlimited possibilities of spiritual freedom. "Of all creatures only the most perfect is capable of evil. . . . The devil is not the most limited but the most unlimited of all creatures." (I, 7, 368) Nor is evil a mere means to a higher good. Mephistopheles is not as harmless as he pretends when he describes himself to Faust as

> Part of that Power not understood
> Which always wills the Bad,
> And always does the Good.[9]

Evil is a positive force. It manifests itself most clearly, not in small and mean spirits, but in the greatest and most dynamic. In these spirits evil does not flow from cowardice and trepidation, but from a terrible strength, and a genuine enthusiasm. Schelling says: "Just as there is ardor for the good, there is also an enthusiasm for evil."[10] In other words, Schelling has discovered, not merely evil in its petty forms, the evil of thieves and knaves. He has discovered the demonic. The terrible reality of the demonic shatters the identity of the Absolute.

It might seem that there is an obvious escape from these metaphysical difficulties. Why not turn to radical dualism or pluralism, as philosophers have done so often before, and under similar circumstances? To Schelling such an escape is utterly inadmissible. For since Kant philosophy has learned that every system joins together whatever it puts asunder. No system therefore can assert more than one Absolute without contradicting itself. Radical dualism and pluralism are systems in which reason contradicts itself; they are mere admissions of philosophic failure. Schelling writes (I, 7, 354): "Dualism . . . is merely a system in which reason mutilates itself and reveals its despair."

But if this is so, then Schelling is driven into a well-nigh desperate situation. There can only be one Absolute, yet every act of freedom is a new absolute. The Absolute is total harmony, yet evil has a terrible reality. The problem is desperate indeed: but here, as so often in philosophy, the profoundest insights arise from the gravest difficulties.

It must be noted that the problem of freedom appears here in a strange and novel setting. To Kant, freedom means freedom from natural causation. Now it suddenly means freedom from the Absolute. And this involves the most startling reversal. For Kant and idealism, freedom works toward the ideal, toward the divine purpose. Man in his moral freedom is co-worker with God. Now freedom, in its primary meaning, means freedom *against* God. We say: in its primary meaning. If free choice, as such, contradicts the absolute identity, then not

[9]Goethe, *Faust*, trans. B. Taylor (New York, n.d.), 77.
[10]I, 7, 372; *Of Human Freedom*, trans. Gutmann, 48.

only the choice of evil, but *all* choice is in some sense anti-divine. For prior to any particular choice is the choice to choose at all. The primary anti-divine act is not the choice of evil, but the choice of self. "If spirit is divine, and yet not God, then it is divine and anti-divine at the same time" (II, 1, 460).

Thus all of a sudden the smooth transition from finite to infinite spirit has disappeared. In idealism, man is the more in harmony with the divine the more autonomously he follows his moral reason. There is no tragic conflict here between God and the moral self. Now such a tragic conflict has made its appearance. Rather than being a harmonious co-worker with God, man is now Prometheus, that infinitely tragic figure who is right and wrong, divine and anti-divine at the same time. He necessarily obeys his moral conscience, yet in so doing necessarily sins against the gods. To be truly moral he must be autonomous, yet this very autonomy implicates him in guilt against the divine. "Since he is driven by moral necessity, Prometheus is right. Nevertheless he is punished for his deed by infinite tortures. . . . For Zeus is right as well; the freedom from God is bought at no less a price. Here lies a contradiction which we cannot resolve but only recognize. . . ." (II, 1, 485)

Schelling solves his problem by the doctrine of a cosmic fall. Since absolute identity and human freedom cannot exist together, and yet since both are real, the only possible solution is that an original cosmic identity has been shattered by an original act of finite freedom. In this primeval act, original man, who was like God, sought to make himself God. This cosmic fall is the source of evil.

But by itself, the doctrine of the fall by no means solves the problem of evil. If the fall from absolute identity is the source of evil, how was such a fall possible? Schelling has no other choice but to locate the source of evil in the Deity himself, yet in such a way that this source is not evil in the Deity; it becomes evil only when torn out of the divine identity.

Deeply inspired by the seventeenth-century mystic Jacob Boehme, Schelling develops a concept of divine personality. All personality is a unity, but it is not a simple unity. Personality is the perpetual actualization of selfhood; it is the conscious and purposive control of irrational underlying potentialities. All personality therefore involves two factors: a dark ground, which is the source of uncontrolled vitality, and a self which unites, controls, and directs this ground. God is the absolute personality; He is the absolute Self, holding in command and control His own dark ground. The function of the divine ground is to slumber in the still night of potentiality, as the negative source of the

divine vitality. Its function is not to be, but to be potential. This dark ground may be called the demonic in God since, in itself, it is dynamic power without order or control. Schelling can therefore say the daring words: "The Deity reigns over a world of horrors."[11]

In God this ground rests in harmonious slumber, fulfilling its vital function. But woe unto the world when Prometheus appears on the scene! Seeking to make himself absolute, he seeks to control the divine ground. But he succeeds only in tearing it out of the divine harmony, and giving it demonic actuality. The world, and he with it, falls under its destructive power. Prometheus-Faust has done his sacrilegious deed. Well may the cosmic chorus of spirits wail, as Goethe makes it wail:

> Alas, alas!
> Thou hast it destroyed,
> The beautiful world
> With powerful fist:
> In ruin 'tis hurled,
> By the blow of a demigod shattered.[12]

IV

This is the point which Schelling reaches in his *Of Human Freedom* of 1809 and his *Ages of the World* of 1811. It appears to him at that time that the doctrine of a cosmic fall has resolved the difficulties besetting the system. But the time for the Philosophy of Revelation has not yet arrived. Thirty years are yet to pass before Schelling presents his final thoughts to his Berlin audience.

For the truth is that Schelling has by no means mastered the crisis of absolute idealism. On the contrary, he has merely exposed it in its full measure. Thus far, he has merely replaced the idealist system by a better system. Yet the very doctrine which has served to correct idealism will inevitably raise the question whether a system—any system—is possible at all.

It must not be forgotten for a moment that the thesis of identity is the sole foundation of the idealistic conception of a philosophy of religion. A system of the Absolute is possible only if finite spirit can raise itself to identification with Absolute Spirit. But the precise significance of the doctrine of the fall is to deny the possibility of such an identification. Does this not mean that the whole enterprise of an absolute system has become in principle indefensible? Will not any such system be a mere organization of the human imagination?

Schelling now becomes profoundly attentive to this problem. His

[11] I, 8, 268; *The Ages of the World*, trans. Bolman, 156.
[12] *Faust*, trans. Taylor, 88.

Philosophy of Mythology is a study in the religion of fallen man. Man's divine descent makes him a god-seeking being. But because of his fall, his god-seeking is, inevitably, a mere god-positing, though he himself remains unconscious of this fact. But posited gods are not true gods, and mythological religion is idolatry. The fate of idolatry hangs over fallen man, like a heavy cloud. It leads us to ask: is not all religious experience mythological? Is not all god-seeking and god-finding a mere unconscious god-positing? If this is so, then the philosophy of religious experience systematizes mere products of the human imagination. And the attempt to find God in these products is merely the supreme expression of man's inveterate Prometheanism.

Only now is the crisis of idealism fully apparent; and it exhibits the desperate circumstances in which the philosophic concern with the divine seems to find itself. Since Kant, the philosopher can no longer find God outside experience; and now it seems that he cannot find Him within experience either. For the first time since Parmenides, God has become radically inaccessible to the speculative philosopher. It might seem that if God is to be accessible at all, He must break into experience by virtue of the absurd, by virtue of an act whose possibility and actuality are equally unintelligible. In other words, it appears that in relation to the divine, philosophy has suffered total bankruptcy.

And yet the situation is not so simple as that. Schelling does not for a moment consider becoming a Barthian. If reason cannot reach God, this in itself is an insight which can be reached by reason itself. If man has fallen, he can at least know his fallen condition; and in knowing it he in part transcends it. Philosophy of religion requires a point of departure which reason cannot provide. But reason itself can understand that it cannot provide it. In the failure of reason to reach, what it yet must seek to reach, the new philosophy of religion will discover its point of departure.

Schelling's first task therefore is to expose the failure of reason to reach God. This task consists simply in a critical re-examination of the idealistic enterprise. Idealism now becomes, instead of a metaphysics, a mere experiment in autonomous reason, carried out by reason in order that it can discover the limits of its autonomy.

What then does the experiment in autonomous reasoning reveal? Surveying the facts of experience, reason finds them to be universally interrelated. One and all, they require an explanation. In seeking an adequate explanation, reason is driven to ever higher syntheses. And it can stop in this search for consistency nowhere short of the Absolute.

There is nothing wrong with the logic of this movement. The question is only what ontological interpretation it is to be given. Idealism

identifies the necessary movement of thought with a necessary movement of reality, and thus identifies its idea of the Absolute with the Absolute itself. But this is an error. For while apprehending real characteristics of the world, reason at the same time ignores others equally real. The system of reason grasps unity and necessity, but must ignore discord, freedom, and chance. Above all, it must ignore existence itself. The system of reason is therefore not a system of reality at all, but an ideal construction.

And yet it is not an arbitrary construction. It arises in response to the needs of the facts. Reason must necessarily seek to explain them; but because its system is merely an ideal construction, it equally necessarily fails to explain them. The system must issue, not in a harmonious solution, but in a paradox.

The last idea of reason is God. As the ultimate synthesis of all existence, God is defined as the necessarily existent. Here the idealist believes he has found the Alpha and Omega: the system is complete. But he is mistaken. For since reason abstracts from existence, it reaches in the end, not the necessarily existent, but merely the idea of the necessarily existent. And this is a self-contradictory idea. Its content is necessary existence, but *qua* idea, it is non-existent. The form and content of this idea are in inevitable contradiction. This idea expresses the radical crisis of reason: at its culminating point, reason is necessarily driven to seek what it necessarily fails to find. If there is a God, He is incommensurable with reason.

Nor can God be found in feeling. If Hegel is wrong, so is Schleiermacher. The philosopher "might argue that the God who is mere idea in reason becomes real in feeling. . . . But what if one were to show that this so-called real God is a mere creature of our feeling, that every idea has merely psychological significance?" (II, 3, 154) Schelling does not reject reason in favour of feeling. He rejects the thesis of identity. God, if He exists, is external to feeling as well as reason. God must be discovered if reality is to be explained; but reason cannot discover Him. The experiment in autonomous reason ends in despair.

In this despair the new philosophy of religion is to find its point of departure. But how can it find such a point? If there is a radical gap between reason and the Absolute, only a radical leap can bridge it. But can such a leap be anything but arbitrary? Does the despair of reason show that we must leap, and where to leap?

Schelling writes (II, 3, 171): "The last idea of reason has this peculiarity that the philosophizing person cannot be indifferent to its existence or non-existence, as he is in the case of every other idea. Here the watchword is: *Tua res agitur*." Schelling at this point takes

a sharp turn. The idea of God is not only the crowning piece of the system, but also the highest aspiration of the system-builder. The system is merely the abstract expression of the spiritual attitude of its builder. The philosopher seeks to absorb in an Absolute, not just existence in general, but his own personal existence. In philosophic contemplation Prometheus seeks to repent of his Prometheanism, by surrendering himself to an ideal deity. The attempt to reach identity is an attempt to obliterate the self in God.

But it is the tragedy of Prometheus that he cannot undo his deed. The theoretical despair of his thought merely reflects an existential despair which he lives and suffers. For he seeks to, but cannot, absorb his person in his system. He is torn between the self-assertion by which he lives, and the contemplative self-surrender by which he seeks to, but cannot live. "The self might be satisfied with the purely ideal God, if he could remain in this state of contemplation. But this is impossible. The surrender of action cannot be carried out. Action is inevitable. . . . The former despair returns. For the discord is not overcome." (II, 1, 560)

Thus the problem has suddenly shifted from a contradiction in ideas to a contradiction in the existence of the philosophizing person. And just as the crisis of thought reveals the limits of an autonomous reason, so the crisis in existence reveals the limits of an autonomous life. But whereas thought can be left in suspense, life cannot. The crisis must be ended by a leap.

This leap is a humiliation of reason. For by it there is acceptance, not of the idea of the absolute Existent, but of the absolute Existent Himself. And this reality is not only unknowable but even unthinkable. To this unthinkable reality reason has indeed pointed, but it cannot reach it.

But this acceptance as such resolves neither the intellectual nor the existential despair. How can the philosopher *or* the man solve his problem by accepting a reality wholly outside his reach? The answer is simply that his problem can be solved only if God Himself has solved it. If God is radically outside human reason, feeling, and will, then He can become accessible only if He reveals Himself. No human step can achieve what only revelation can achieve. The leap merely enables the philosopher to recognize and understand a revelation if it has in fact taken place. Schelling writes (II, 1, 566): "Him he wants, the God who acts . . . who as an existing God can oppose the fact of the fall, the God who is the Lord of being. . . . The self cannot arrogate unto himself the task of finding Him. God Himself must meet him with his aid and succour. But the self may will Him, and hope to gain

blessedness by His aid." In other words, Schelling has unmasked the unmoving God of the philosophers as a mere ideal construction. If there is a God, He is the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob. The philosopher cannot ascend to God. But he can find Him if He has descended. The philosophy of religious experience has suffered collapse. Its place is now taken by the Philosophy of Revelation.

V

It might well appear baffling how Schelling, having taken a leap into faith, can ever find his way back to reason. Philosophy may achieve a meaningful concept of revelation, but surely it can go no further. How can it hope to identify an actual revelation? What objective criterion can there be for distinguishing what is revelation from what is not? It might seem that a revelation can be asserted only on the basis of faith, and that Schelling therefore must choose between philosophy and revelation: a Philosophy of Revelation is impossible.

But Schelling denies this fateful alternative. Indeed, the entire Philosophy of Revelation is meant to be its explicit refutation. Schelling does indeed return to orthodox Christianity; but in so doing he does not betray or surrender philosophy.

The Philosophy of Revelation has a clear task and a clear method. Its task is to explain the world, in all its aspects. Its method is to follow rational construction wherever this is possible; for while limited, reason is not impotent. But the emphasis lies, not on what reason includes, but on what it is forced to omit. All those factors which escape rational necessity are explained in terms of cosmic acts of will. The Philosophy of Revelation is therefore a metaphysical system; but it is a system whose unity is, at crucial points, shattered by acts of freedom. These acts are not an *a priori* necessity, but an *a posteriori* fact.

The first of these facts is existence itself. Having accepted on faith an Absolute Existent, we ask: why does anything exist apart from Him? From a God beyond all reason nothing can be deduced, and all emanationist theories are in principle mistaken. The world can only be the result of a primordial act of will. Creation must be accepted as a fact for which no further explanation can be given.

But while the fact of creation can only be accepted, its nature can be rationally understood. In creation God manifests Himself as free will, and free will can be rationally analysed. Free will is the freedom to will or not to will. This involves a distinction of potential and actual will; and, since neither potential nor actual will is free both to will and not to will, it further involves the synthesis of potential and actual will, which alone is free to will or not to will. The creation is an organic unity of cosmic matter, cosmic form, and cosmic spirit or freedom.

This doctrine has a superficial resemblance to Spinoza's pantheism. But there are two decisive differences. Unlike Spinoza's *natura naturans*, Schelling's God creates freely; His creation is not an *a priori* necessity but an *a posteriori* fact. And unlike Spinoza's *natura naturata*, Schelling's creation is not wholly governed by necessity. Cosmic matter and cosmic form are so governed; but cosmic spirit is free.

Yet the creation is very different from the actual world. The creation is an organic unity; the actual world is externalized, chaotic, and full of evil. The creation has been destroyed, and only a further cosmic act of will can explain this destruction. Schelling here uses the doctrine of the fall developed in earlier years. An act of rebellion on the part of original man has caused universal externality and evil. The original world has become the actual world which is ours.

The question now arises whether all the facts of experience can be explained without further cosmic acts of will. The creation accounts for the element of rationality and order in the world, while the fall accounts for the irrational and chaotic elements. But there is one fact which is explained by neither. This is the fact of human history. From this point on, the Philosophy of Revelation becomes philosophy of history.

History occurs only where there is realization of new meaning. There can therefore be no history either in the original creation or in a merely fallen world. None is possible in the former because no new meaning remains to be realized; none in the latter because no new meaning can be realized. The fall has indeed made history a meaningful problem. It has made what is fall short of what ought to be. It thus raises the problem of which history might be the solution. But in a merely fallen world this solution cannot be accomplished. A merely fallen world exists in time; but mere time does not solve the problem, it perpetually repeats it. Nature exists in mere time; but nature, says Schelling, forever repeats itself in "melancholy monotony." If there is a history, it is as yet not understood.

Historical novelty clearly cannot consist in accidental variations of the same fundamental condition. Such variations belong to the realm of mere nature. Historical novelty can consist only in a change of that fundamental condition itself. Hence we can inquire into the nature of human history only after first defining the fundamental condition of man.

Man's existence after the fall is determined by his contradictory relation to God. His divine descent makes him an incomplete and therefore a god-seeking being. But by reason of the fall he cannot find God. This contradictory existence is mythological existence. Man has

fallen under the domination of the cosmic powers which are not God but which he, as a god-seeking being, perforce deifies. This mythological existence is the universal fate of fallen man. If it remains unrelieved and unaltered, then man has no more a history than the rest of fallen creation.

Man may, of course, strive to escape his mythological bondage. He may seek to transcend its contradictions, and to reach a higher truth. But if the world is simply fallen he cannot succeed. Indeed, his efforts can only serve to intensify the anguish of his condition. His fate, like that of nature, will be the eternal repetition of the same contradiction, in melancholy monotony.

But Schelling discovers that there is in fact a history of mythology. Mythological deities replace each other, and as they do, they reveal a tendency to transcend the whole mythological condition. This development culminates in the Greek mysteries which reflect a crisis of the mythological consciousness, and therefore an escape from its externality into a higher and more inward truth.

The question is how this history is to be explained. After what has already been said, it is clear that Schelling rejects the categories used by the ordinary historian of mythology. Mythology is neither an invention of the poets, nor is it philosophy in a popular garb. Nor again is it a mere superstition which rational enlightenment might have removed at any time. Schelling regards these views as based on the shallow prejudice of the Enlightenment, and as unable to explain the facts. Mythological man lives and suffers his mythology; he sacrifices himself to the mythological deities, and his final escape into the mysteries is a genuine liberation. No mere accidental human invention or prejudice could have such profound effects. Mythological existence can be explained only in terms of a real domination by real cosmic powers.

But if the mythological condition is no mere human creation, then neither is its development. As we have seen, the unaided efforts of mythological man would only sharpen the tensions implicit in his condition; but they would not alter or remove them. Thus Schelling is driven to the conclusion that mythological history is not a human, but a human-divine history. It can be explained only in terms of a real intervention of God, which relieves and modifies the pressure of the cosmic powers upon the human consciousness.

The question now arises whether all historical facts can be understood in terms of the mythological process. In his youth, Schelling had interpreted Christianity in mythological terms. But now he holds that the facts preclude such an interpretation. The content of mythology illustrates, in varying degrees, man's fallen condition. The content of

Christianity is the redemption from that condition. The philosopher understands mythology in terms of standards of truth different from those of mythology itself. Thus mythology proves to be a real relation to the divine, yet at the same time a false relation. But applying his standards of truth to Christianity, the philosopher finds them to coincide with those of Christianity itself. Christianity claims to be an actual incursion of God into history, an incarnation whose purpose is the redemption of man from his fallen condition. The philosopher has already discovered man's fallen condition, and the need for precisely such an incursion, if he is to be redeemed from it. Thus if Christianity is a real relation to God, it will also be a true relation, a relation to God as He truly is.

Is Christianity a real relation to God? If even mythology must involve such a relation, then *a fortiori* Christianity must. Schelling sharply repudiates those who would reduce Christianity to the ideas of the man Jesus. Its essence does not consist in moral ideas, nor even in the idea of redemption and a Christ. Such ideas would merely aggravate to its extreme point the anguish of man's fallen state. But Christianity is not the exposure of man's fallen condition; it is the redemption from it. It is therefore not the teaching of Christ, or the idea of Christ, but Christ himself. Schelling sums up (II, 3, 195): "The true content of Christianity is a history into which the divine enters. . . . The historical element is not accidental to the doctrine, but the doctrine itself."

Here the Philosophy of Revelation culminates. Its essential content is revelation: for if God is wholly other than human reason, then He can be accessible only if He has revealed Himself. But it is nevertheless philosophy: for because of its dialectical relation to the divine, reason can by itself understand the need for revelation, and its meaning if and when it takes place.

VI

More than one hundred years have passed since the *Philosophy of Revelation* was written. The critical student of today has little difficulty in bringing its whole bold structure to collapse. Indeed, in retrospect it becomes clear that it retains many of the speculative doctrines which it sought to repudiate.

But it would be rash to dismiss the *Philosophy of Revelation* because of its factual or logical errors. For its essential problem is still the essential problem of religious thought. This problem has divided contemporary thinkers into two sharply opposed camps. But the solutions put forward by each camp are not impressive.

The thinker of the one camp makes religious experience the object

of his philosophy. He thus carries on the idealistic tradition. But he has repudiated his idealistic ancestor, and has responded to the crisis of the absolute system by surrendering all aspirations to such a system. Instead, he makes religious experience a mere empirical fact which, he is proud to say, he studies by means of the scientific method. If he remembers his idealistic ancestor at all, he thinks of him with condescension, as dogmatic, pretentious, and, worst accusation of all, unscientific. But he would do well to remember him more frequently, and with less condescension. For the ancestor knew a few things which the descendant seems to have forgotten. He knew, for example, that the philosophy of religious experience requires a criterion of religious truth, and that the merely empirical study of religious experience is unable, not only to find such a criterion, but even to justify the concept of religious truth itself. But in the absence of such a justification, the philosophy of religious experience degenerates into mere psychology.

The thinker of this camp does, of course, dimly realize the need for a criterion of religious truth, but he fails to realize that his standpoint makes a criterion inaccessible. Thus he looks for criteria which he can find, criteria which are empirically verifiable. He finds the useful and the emotionally satisfying, and tries to persuade himself that these are adequate. He may persuade himself; but he persuades no one else, least of all the genuine religious believer. In brief, the thinker of this camp has responded to the crisis of absolute idealism by adopting a half-hearted idealism: but a half-hearted idealism refutes itself.

The other camp has repudiated in principle the philosophy of religious experience. It has responded to the crisis of idealism by turning away from religious experience to God Himself. This can only be a God who has supernaturally revealed Himself. In relation to this God, reason is regarded as wholly impotent. The thinker of this camp tends to combine theological orthodoxy with a radical philosophical scepticism.

But is such a combination really possible? If this scepticism is really radical, it would seem to destroy theology along with philosophy. For if by theology we mean the explication of a divine revelation, then theology requires categories of explication. It requires, for example, the category of revelation. And this category must be rationally intelligible, even if the revelation itself is not. If there are no such categories, then the theologian cannot add a single word of interpretation to the revealed document itself. The theologian may be correct in lifting revelation above the reach of philosophy; but if he wholly repudiates the philosophic concern with the divine, then he refutes himself.

Thus the philosophic concern with the divine is in sore straits in our time. For in one of the two dominant camps the divine has vanished, and in the other, philosophy. But it is of course possible that this whole concern rests on a fundamental mistake, and that the great tradition from the Greeks to the nineteenth century is merely a divine comedy. Many contemporary thinkers are of this opinion; indeed, there are schools of thought which have declared the philosophic concern with the divine to be dead and buried. But one wonders whether the profoundest part of philosophic tradition can be eliminated by a few trifling distinctions or empirical observations. Perhaps this burial has been a little too hasty. Perhaps it proves, not the demise of the interred, but an indecent haste on the part of the undertakers.

If man's concern with the divine is perennial, and if it is at least in part rational, then what is needed in our time is renewal and rejuvenation. Those concerned with such a renewal would do well to take note of Schelling, who first struggled with a crisis which still casts its shadow over us.

MILTON AND HOPKINS

SISTER M. AQUINAS HEALY, R.S.M.

THE strongest point of contact between Milton and Hopkins is their prosody. Strangely enough, early comparisons of the two poets scarcely refer to versification. By 1940, however, critics could lament the disproportionate amount of study devoted to Hopkins the technician at the expense of Hopkins the man, the thinker, and the priest. In the analyses of his prosodical innovations, Miltonic influences have been pointed out repeatedly. Perhaps, in the long run, the value of any comparison between Milton and Hopkins will lie in the illumination of just such analyses.

Since, however, estimates of the importance of the relationship between the two poets have maintained no degree of constancy in the last twenty years, it will be valuable for the student of Hopkins to clarify Hopkins' own view of Milton. An examination of the poems, letters, journals, note-books, and papers reveals no less than seventy-four references to Milton. Seventy-two of these concern Milton the poet, one Milton the man, and one Milton the thinker.

There is no ambiguity whatever in Hopkins' judgment of Milton the man. It is characteristic of Hopkins that he seldom discussed personalities in his letters, but when he did he was unequivocal (witness his appraisal of Gladstone). Bridges had sent him some sonnets for criticism, among them one addressed to Milton, in which Bridges exclaimed:

> O hot political spirit! thou dost now
> Quench thy desires in heaven, and thy high style
> Mayst match with Dante, climbed upon the brow
>
> Of Paradise a second time. Our isle
> Proud of her son forgets her loss, for thou
> Shalt keep her speech honoured in heaven awhile.

Hopkins' comment is revealing:

> Don't like what you say of Milton. I think he was a very bad man: those who contrary to our Lord's command both break themselves and, as St. Paul says, consent to those who break the sacred bond of marriage, like Luther and Milton, fall with open eyes into the terrible judgment of God. Crying up great names, as for instance the reviews do now Swinburne and Hugo, those plagues of mankind, is often wicked and full of impious brag and blackguard and unspiritual mind.[1]

[1] *The Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins to Robert Bridges*, Claude C. Abbott, ed. (London, 1935), 39. Hereafter referred to as *Letters*.

The sonnet was, significantly, omitted from Bridges' later *Poetical Works*. Hopkins' judgment on marriage was reiterated in another letter to Bridges written a year and a half later.[2]

Hopkins' only comment on Milton's thought occurs in a communication addressed to his friend Richard Dixon,[3] in which he quotes with approval Milton's famous lines, "Fame is the spur that the clear spirit doth raise . . . To scorn delights, and live laborious days." A spur very hard to find a substitute for or do without, remarks Hopkins. Then he hastens to explain that fame is the "true atmosphere" of artists, whereas fame in itself is as dangerous as wealth every bit, and probably as hard to enter the kingdom of heaven with. Hopkins was wont to urge Bridges and Dixon to seek literary glory, but, as for himself, he chose a dedicated life of sacrifice which precluded any desire for public reputation.

Every other Miltonic comment of Hopkins concerns Milton the artist. Here he anticipates Belloc in recognizing the supreme artist in the "bad man." The superlatives with which Hopkins honours Milton are reserved for him alone—not Shakespeare nor Homer nor Dante can equal him in style: he is the master of all the world. In verse-structure he is in advance, not only of his own time, but of all after-times.[4] Hopkins analyses with characteristic definiteness (he said of himself that he possessed a "passion for explanation") the sources of Milton's supremacy. *Paradise Lost* has the seriousness which is the touchstone of the highest or most living art; not gravity, but "being in earnest with your subject—reality."[5] Some of the world's greatest poems—*Faust* and even the *Divine Comedy*—Hopkins felt are "not taken in earnest enough, are farce (where you ask the spectator to grant you something not only conventional but monstrous)." This is not true of Milton's epic. *Samson Agonistes, Comus,* and Milton's sonnets, moreover, all belong to the works of standard and classical beauty.[6] Milton's balance, "fineness," and "largeness" of style, his use of the very words of Scripture with "splendid effects," his plainness and severity in the sonnets (which are not "tender" as Shakespeare's), Hopkins not only admires but emulates.[7]

Milton he classifies as a member of the School of the Lake Poets and Shelley and Landor, as opposed to the Romantic School of Keats and Shakespeare and the Sentimental School of Byron:

[2] *Ibid.*, 298.
[3] *The Correspondence of Gerard Manley Hopkins and Richard Watson Dixon,* Claude C. Abbott, ed. (London, 1935), 6. Hereafter referred to as *Correspondence.*
[4] *Ibid.*, 13. [5] *Letters,* 225.
[6] *Further Letters of Gerard Manley Hopkins Including His Correspondence with Coventry Patmore,* Claude C. Abbott, ed. (London, 1938), 110, 149.
[7] *Letters,* 38, 66, 87, 113, 159; *Further Letters,* 192.

Schools are very difficult to class: the best guide, I think, are keepings. Keats' school chooses medieval keepings, not pure nor drawn from the middle ages direct but as brought down through that Elizabethan tradition of Shakespere and his contemporaries which died out in such men as Herbert and Herrick. They were also great realists and observers of nature. The Lake poets and all that school represent, as it seems to me, *the mean or standard of English style and diction, which culminated in Milton* but was never very continuous or vigorously transmitted, and in fact none of these men unless perhaps Landor were great masters of style, though their diction is generally pure, lucid, and unarchaic. . . . Byron's school had a deep feeling but the most untrustworthy and barbarous eye, for nature; a diction markedly modern; and their keepings any gaud or a lot of Oriental rubbish. . . .[8]

To which of these schools does Hopkins himself belong? In the light of his statement of his aims—"Markedness of rhythm . . . and naturalness of expression"[9]—and of his avowed striving for a "more balanced and Miltonic style," I suspect that he would have aligned himself in poetical language with the school of Milton. But the question is not so simple: it has provoked one of the hottest controversies among students of Hopkins. Ever since 1918, when Bridges first associated the names of Milton and Hopkins, the problem has remained with us. In 1930 Charles Williams declared that Milton was the best key to an understanding of Hopkins.[10] Two years later, F. R. Leavis insisted that "Hopkins belongs with Shakespeare, Donne, Eliot and the later Yeats as opposed to Spenser, Milton and Tennyson."[11] E. E. Phare joined the controversy in 1933 to assert that "Milton and Hopkins had little in common" (Crashaw and Wordsworth provided the key!).[12] Six years later, Terence Heywood expressed relief that "critics have fortunately given up likening Hopkins to Milton," because he "is *not* in the Spenser-Milton-Tennyson tradition."[13] But the Milton-Hopkins enthusiasts did not relent so easily. In 1944 Josephine Miles reiterated the early plea of Williams. Hopkins, she believed, uses the poetical language of Milton and Keats, and she provided a concordance-like (and convincing) study of his vocabulary to prove it.[14] Robert Lowell blandly remarked, meanwhile, that Hopkins "worked at least four different traditions, the alliterative, the Miltonic, the metaphysical and the Keatsian romantic."[15] The last word, to date, has been said by W. H. Gardner, editor of Hopkins' poems, who remarks of the

[8] *Correspondence*, 98. [9] *Letters*, 46.
[10] See Introduction to *Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (New York, 1930).
[11] F. R. Leavis, *New Bearings in English Poetry* (London, 1932), 171.
[12] E. E. Phare, *The Poetry of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (London, 1933), 8.
[13] Terence Heywood, "Hopkins' Ancestry," *Poetry*, LIV, 1939, 271–9.
[14] The Kenyon Critics, *Gerard Manley Hopkins* (Norfolk, Conn., 1944), 55–71.
[15] *Ibid.*, 93.

poet's "magic of diction": "Having learnt from Shakespeare and Keats, Hopkins is now worthy to rest in their company."[16]

The most patent conclusion is, of course, platitudinous: the master will always make the best of the past his own, but he will emerge inimitable. In this matter of diction, however, it may be well to consult Hopkins himself once more. "Poetical language," he says, "is the current language of an age heightened, to any degree heightened and unlike itself, but *not* an obsolete one. This is Shakespeare's *and* Milton's practice and the want of it will be fatal to Tennyson's Idylls and plays, to Swinburne, and perhaps to Morris."[17] And again, "mastery of phrase, of the rhetoric of verse, . . . belongs to the tradition of Shakespeare *and* Milton. . . ."[18] (Italics are mine.) Might not Hopkins himself have been mildly surprised at a controversy over whether he belongs to the Miltonic or the Shakespearean tradition? But he liked schools, and, with his penchant for analysis, I feel sure he would have joined wholeheartedly in the little game of classification.

By far the greatest quantity of Hopkins' criticism of Milton, however, deals with those elements of his artistry which are concerned with rhythm and metre. Hopkins was probably the first critic who thoroughly understood Milton's prosody, particularly that of the choruses of *Samson Agonistes*. To him, Milton's versification was quite beyond any other poet's. He was amazed that so great a writer as Newman should have fallen into the error of contrasting the first chorus of the *Agonistes* with the opening of Southey's *Thalaba* to the advantage of the latter, to demonstrate the gain in smoothness and correctness of versification since Milton's time.[19] Charges that Milton's rhythm was rough exasperated him, and he defended his own experiments in Miltonic rhythms with his usual definiteness: "Only remark, as you say that there is no conceivable licence I shd. not be able to justify, that with all my licences, or rather laws, I am stricter than you and I might say than anybody I know. . . . So that I may say that my apparent licences are counter-balanced, and more, by strictness. In fact all English verse, except Milton's almost, offends me as licentious. Remember this."[20] "Miltonic rhythm" was, for Hopkins, an entirely singular case of the use of sprung rhythm: singular because Milton was the only master of it in English verse. As for Anglo-Saxon poetry, Hopkins did not begin the study of it until several years before he died. As late as 1882, however, we find him writing to Bridges that, between the great beauty of Anglo-Saxon poetry and Milton, he found sprung rhythm

[16]See Introduction to *Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins* (New York, 1948), xxv.
[17]*Letters*, 89.
[18]*Ibid.*, 93.
[19]*Correspondence*, 13.
[20]*Letters*, 44–5.

only in the "degraded and doggrel" verse of *Piers Ploughman*, certain passages in Greene, and a cadence here and there in later poetry.[21]

Because Milton's rhythms were "caviare to the general," they were not understood. To Hopkins, Milton was "the great standard in the use of counterpoint."[22] *Paradise Regained* shows an advance in his art over *Paradise Lost*, in the more frequent use of counterpoint; but the choruses of the *Agonistes*, being counterpointed throughout, are his finest achievement. Hopkins discovered few lines in these choruses that have five real stresses (one or two being blank), though in idea there are always five. He concluded that when a poet reaches the point at which a mounted rhythm overpowers the original one, the latter is superfluous and may be got rid of. It is only the last step that Milton did not take. Hopkins goes so far as to suggest that Milton was thoroughly conscious that his rhythm was sprung, but that he kept up a fiction of counterpointing a heard rhythm upon a standard rhythm because he was driven to it by a want of a metrical notation and a fear of the critics.[23] They might have accused him of writing mere rhythmic or even unrhythmic prose. (Hopkins takes great pains to point out the difference between his own sprung rhythm and what he considered the rhythmic prose of Walt Whitman.)[24] Milton's mounted rhythm, however, is a real poetical rhythm, having its own laws and recurrence.

The rhythms of Milton, more than any other element of his art, make him the great master of "sequence of phrase," as opposed to "sequence of feeling," which is a dramatic quality.[25] His "absolute precision of language," his deliberate unrolling of a "vast material which his mighty hands alone can grasp, unroll, and display," make Milton's verse, to Hopkins' extremely sensitive ear, something necessary and eternal. It is not an easy matter to determine which element Hopkins valued more in his own poetry: sequence of phrase or sequence of feeling. Certainly both elements were subject to a logical censorship, and that to a great degree. The peculiar quality of his genius which Dixon called his "terrible crystal," that unique concentration of experience which leaves the reader bruised and breathless, would seem, at first thought, to be much more a matter of feeling than of phrase. And yet, no one was more conscious than Hopkins how much his "terrible pathos" was dependent on phrasing and on diction. Seldom does he speak of feeling with relation to his own poetry, while his continual effort is directed toward Miltonic style and rhythm. Nor can one forget that famous letter to Bridges, written two years before

[21] *Ibid.*, 156.
[22] *Correspondence*, 15.
[23] *Letters*, 45–6.
[24] *Ibid.*, 154–8.
[25] *Correspondence*, 8.

Hopkins died, in which he declares his "style tends always more toward Dryden."[26] And why? Because "his style and his rhythms lay the strongest stress of all our literature on the naked thew and sinew of the English language." Milton and Dryden are the two poets whom Hopkins avowedly imitates. Both were masters of what Hopkins calls "sequence of phrase." He agreed with his friend Dixon that Milton was excelled by others in dramatic quality, but in style he was "unsurpassed." The fact that Hopkins strove to emulate the style of Milton and of Dryden would seem to indicate that he valued sequence of phrase above sequence of feeling.

Hopkins carries his analyses of Milton's versification further. He discusses, for example, its marked attention to consonant-quality or gravity of sound in his line-endings;[27] caesural variations of the ten-syllable iambic which preclude monotony;[28] and the greater eccentricity of Milton's later art, in which he is likened to Shakespeare, Turner, and Beethoven.[29] The sonnets receive special study. Hopkins is fascinated by the manner in which Milton makes up, in the English sonnet, for lack of length (which the Italian sonnet has) by the use of monosyllabic lines.[30] He writes excitedly to Bridges for an explanation of how correctly to make codas to sonnets, for "a sonnet is hot on the anvil and wants the coda."[31] There is no indication that Hopkins was aware of the common use of the sonnet with a coda for satirical effect by the Italian sonneteers. Bridges referred him to Milton, and shortly thereafter "Tom's Garland" was completed with Milton as a model.

A question of importance to students of both Milton and Hopkins—and Bridges, too, it seems to me—is the extent of Hopkins' influence on Bridges' *Milton's Prosody*. A thorough re-examination of all prosodical writings of both poets—and in particular Bridges' *Neo-Miltonic Syllabics, Explanation of the Prosody of My Late Syllabic 'Free Verse'*, dated 1923 and unpublished until 1933—in the light of Hopkins' letters to Bridges is needed. Unfortunately, Bridges' side of the correspondence was destroyed (probably by himself after the letters had been returned to him at Hopkins' death). Pertinent comments in Hopkins' letters seem to indicate that his part in Bridges' work on Milton's prosody is not negligible.[32] Bridges sent his essay, *On the Elements of English Verse in Paradise Lost* (which grew eventually into

[26] *Letters*, 267.
[27] *Correspondence*, 41.
[28] *The Note-Books and Papers of Gerard Manley Hopkins*, Humphry House, ed. (London, 1937), 238, 241. Also, *Further Letters*, 180.
[29] *Further Letters*, 23.
[30] *Correspondence*, 86.
[31] *Letters*, 263.
[32] Ten years before Bridges wrote his *Milton's Prosody*, Hopkins told his friend Dixon that he had often thought of writing on the subject. See *Letters*, 13–14.

Milton's Prosody) to Hopkins for criticism. The latter studied it thoroughly, suggesting immediately that "if space allows, some things should be expanded." He made considerable notes, checking oversights of Bridges.[33] The essay is mentioned several times in the correspondence of the two between August, 1887, and January, 1888. Bridges' most important omission, Hopkins seemed to believe, was the definition and origin of the "principle of Equivalence":

> I cannot but hope that in your metrical Paper you will somewhere distinctly state the principle of Equivalence and that it was quite unrecognized in Milton's and still more in Shakespeare's time. All, but especially young, students need to be made clearly to understand what metrical Equivalence is, that it is in use in English now, and that it was not then—and that it was Milton's artifices, as you explain them, that helped to introduce it. Now not to say this, when the context cries for it, is . . is . . I can find nothing to call it but blasted nonsense.[34]

Over two months later Hopkins wrote again to Bridges in a manner which suggests rather conclusively that much of his advice was heeded. He literally purrs with pleasure over Bridges' additions: "In glancing over the paper I am much pleased with the additions and the final treatment. . . . I shall nudge the professors of English about this book and paper."[35]

It is interesting to note that Bridges' failure to mention Patmore's doctrine on metrical law in the first printing of the essay resulted in a "tussle" between the two, Patmore evidently objecting to the inclusion of Hopkins' principles. In discussing the matter with Bridges, Hopkins justified his own suggestions on the grounds that the essay should be historically and logically complete, and the reader should be put in possession of all necessary facts and principles—not mystified by a "superior" style.[36] It may be added, further, that Bridges always submitted his manuscripts to Hopkins before publishing. Time after time he adopted his friend's suggestions in revising his poems. Claude C. Abbott, editor of Hopkins' letters, has checked the revisions against the criticisms, revealing over twenty instances in which Bridges followed Hopkins' advice—a sufficient evidence of influence, which does not take into account missing letters and judgment given during personal interviews. Bridges' dependence on Hopkins' advice and his extreme sensitivity to adverse criticism from his friend is a dominant characteristic of their relationship. It is evident even though Bridges' side of the correspondence is not available. In October, 1879, we find Hopkins writing:

[33] *Ibid.*, 258.
[34] *Ibid.*, 259.
[35] *Ibid.*, 266.
[36] *Ibid.*, 269.

Dearest Bridges—One thing you say in your last is enough to make me quite sad and I see that I shall have to write at some length in order to deal with it. You ask whether I really think there is any good in your going on writing poetry. The reason of this question I suppose to be that I seemed little satisfied with what you then sent and suggested many amendments in the sonnet on Hector. . . . You seem to want to be told over again that you have genius and are a poet and your verses beautiful. . . .[37]

Then follows that beautiful tribute to Bridges in which Hopkins declares, "If I were not your friend I should wish to be the friend of the man who wrote your poems." One frequently gets the impression, in reading the letters, that Bridges is the scholar, Hopkins the master. The extent of Hopkins' influence on Bridges' study of Milton is yet to be determined, but the influence itself is indubitable. It will be well to keep in mind, in the meantime, that a common interest in Milton's prosody was one of the chief sources of the two poets' friendship. One-sixth of all the references to Milton in Hopkins' correspondence are comparisons between the poetry of Milton and of Bridges.

Hopkins' view of Milton, then, is clear. He heartily condemns Milton the man; he has practically nothing to say of Milton the thinker; but Milton the artist, particularly in rhythm and metrical system, he considers the central man of all the world, surpassing all poets of the past, of his own time, and even of all aftertimes. Milton is the master from whom Hopkins learns his own metrical art.

[37] *Ibid.*, 93–6. For further evidence of Bridges' reliance on Hopkins' judgment, see pp. 32, 41, 303.

A GREAT READER OF BALZAC: MARCEL PROUST

LAURENCE LESAGE

ON the occasion of his recent centenary, the republic of letters from Paris to Tokyo has paid particular homage to Balzac, the greatest of nineteenth-century French novelists and a universal genius. Of the writers of the twentieth century, only Marcel Proust seems of adequate stature to inherit his mantle. Already during Proust's lifetime he was hailed as our Balzac, and the years since have in no way questioned his right to the title. The affinities between these titanic painters of society and human character are not merely fortuitous. Proust read Balzac all his life and recognized his influence. Direct echoes from his reading can be heard, both in his works and in his correspondence. They constitute a sort of tribute to Balzac which it seems suitable to recall at this time.

I

"There are perhaps no days of our childhood so fully lived as those we have thought to let slip by, those we have spent with a favourite book."[1] At Illiers by the hawthorn hedge, in Auteuil at Uncle Weil's, the boy Marcel Proust spent his summer holidays in precocious indulgence of "that unpunished vice, reading." Like young Rousseau, he devoured novels and romances, losing himself completely in the life they represented. The last page always brought a moment of anguish when he realized that he never would know what happened afterwards. Historical or semi-historical fiction seemed more gratifying, for with it there is always the possibility of continuing the story. Here was one of Balzac's charms. Thanks to the historical substratum of his novels, which are "to a certain extent impure, mixed with spirit and reality not sufficiently altered," Proust could avoid the cruel good-bye he was forced to say to the majority of books.[2]

As a child, Proust had read here and there in Balzac—*The Country Doctor, The Chouans,* etc.—without developing the enthusiasm he

[1]Proust, "Journées de lecture," *Pastiches et Mélanges* (Paris: Gallimard, 1919), 240.

[2]"Journées de lecture." As many anecdotes testify, neither Proust nor Balzac made sharp distinctions between characters of fiction (frequently their own creations) and persons in real life. Literature was so real to them that they refused to see its personages as less real than living people. Persons and events could be better understood transposed into fiction. Proust said of Balzac: "Ce n'est pas pure illusion quand Balzac, voulant citer de grands médecins, de grands artistes, citera pêle-mêle des noms réels et des personnages de ses livres. . . ." *Le Balzac de Monsieur de Guermantes* (Geneva: Ides et Calendes, 1950), 74. Of Proust himself a friend wrote: "Dans la confusion des siècles et des pays, il unissait morts et

felt for George Sand or Musset.[3] However, while still in his twenties, moved by the devotion to Balzac of his young friend Lucien Daudet, Proust undertook to read the entire works.[4] What novels should he begin with, he inquired of his friend? He said he knew *Old Goriot, The Collection of Antiquities,* and *The Old Maid* and thought he should like to read more of that sort. During the course of his ambitious reading programme, Proust made a number of interesting discoveries which he communicated to Daudet. For example, in *The Collection of Antiquities* he had found a summary of *A Harlot's Progress.* Victurnien d'Esgrignon he declared to be a Lucien Rubenpré without vice. Proust's zeal did not flag even before *The Member for Arcis,* the end of which was written from Balzac's notes, and a supposedly unpublished work, *The Beauvisage Family.* In this work one can learn what happened to the characters of the *Human Comedy* still alive in 1850.

Lucien Daudet, in his account of his early association with Proust,[5] does not inform us exactly when Proust began to read Balzac. It could not, however, have been long after the turn of the century. His articles and letters indicate that from 1903 to 1908, the very period in which he began work on his great novel, Balzac was very much present in his mind. From the items which Proust was offering *Figaro* at the time, one would say he was so immersed in Balzac that when he tried to write, the Balzac manner seemed the easiest and most natural expression. Thus he opened *The Salon of Mme Madeleine Lemaire* (1903) with a parody on Balzac's description. As in Balzac, the description begins outside. The streets, the dwelling, are described at length in meandering sentences, interrupted by reflections and bits of extraneous information. Then gradually we move inside. *The Salon of the Countess Potocka* (1904) opens with reflections upon the strange power of some novelists to describe a society that will exist

vivants, personnages historiques ou de romans, les siens et ses propres amis: il associait le maréchal de Villars avec le colonel Chabert ou le général Mangin, le docteur Cottard avec le médecin de campagne, Madame de Guermantes avec Madame de Maufrigneuse." Jacques Truelle, "Marcel Proust juge de ses personnages," *Nouvelle Revue française,* XX, 1923, 96–7.

[3]However, Madame Gérard Mante-Proust is recently reported to have said that "à la table du petit Marcel Proust . . . la conversation revenait constamment sur Balzac: ses personnages étaient comme de vieilles relations, on débrouillait leurs situations confuses, on leur trouvait des sosies parmi les parents ou les amis." Prefatory remarks by Bernard de Fallois, "Les Personnages de Balzac," *La Table ronde,* XXI, 1950, 9–19.

[4]Reflection of their common interest in Balzac can be noted in Proust's review of Daudet's *Le Prince des Cravates* (1910). See Philip Kolb, "An Unknown Critical Item by Proust," *French Review,* Dec., 1950, 105–9. Allusions to Balzac are woven throughout the article, a pretty compliment to his young initiator into *La Comédie humaine.*

[5]*Autour de soixante lettres de Marcel Proust* (Paris: Gallimard, 1929).

long after they are dead. In *A Princess's Secrets*, Proust suggests, Balzac painted a prophetic picture of the Countess Potocka. In composing these social portraits, the example of Balzac must have been constantly before Proust's eyes.

Some observers have interpreted the Lemoine pastiches (1907-8) as a sort of exorcism, Proust's attempt to rid himself of a literary obsession. His constant reading and his powers of memory and mimicry inclined him to an easy imitation which he feared inhibitory to the free expression of his own personality. He was able, in fact, to recite whole pages of Balzac from memory. Although he declared that "the Muses are daughters of Memory" and "there is no art without remembrance," unintentional pastiches were his particular bugaboo, and some of his own pages had to be sacrificed because they resembled those of other writers. Rather than struggle against imitation, it seemed better to copy deliberately in a purifying exercise. By giving it such direct expression, the influence is exteriorized and presumably dominated.

In the Balzac pastiche, Proust begins by suggesting Balzac's composition. His habit of bringing many people together is mimicked perfectly. Here also is the flash-back technique, familiar to all readers of Balzac. We recognize Arthez, who is Balzac himself as he frequently stands among his characters. Proust does not forget to refer to other works or to place living persons alongside fictitious ones. If we compare this pastiche with the pastiche of Flaubert, we see more clearly characteristic features of style: whereas for imitating Flaubert, Proust uses no dialogue, for Balzac he makes conversation the hub of the piece. Its effect is one of general lightness in contrast with the Flaubertian ponderousness. We recognize turns of phrase typical of Balzac: "In one of the last months of the year 1907," etc., or "M. de Talleyrand, the Roger Bacon of social nature." A complicated and unusual epithet follows a demonstrative: "the mistress of the house, that Carmelite of social success." Proust reproduces Balzac's easygoing images, facile and trite, for example, "women of society who stab one in the heart."[6] In sum, the Lemoine pastiche shows that Proust had grasped and could imitate perfectly the mechanics of Balzac's style. The piece is more than a parody and deserves the title of "synthetic criticism" which Proust himself gave to his pastiches.

Whereas Proust doubtless did well to put himself on guard lest another genius inhibit his own creative activity, his chameleon-like susceptibility made him a very superior sort of critic. Friends testify to

[6]Phrases cited by Jean Mouton, *Le Style de Marcel Proust* (Paris: Corrêa, 1948), 41.

what we know already from his writings, that his comments were never doctrinaire nor didactic, never deformed by erudition. Far removed from the methods of Taine and Sainte-Beuve, Proust's approach to an author amounted to an intimate communion. His own personality was so fluid that it seemed to flow into that of the subject. Jacques Porel says that when he talked about a book he *became* its hero. M. Porel recalls a conversation on Balzac: "He would not leave off talking about Balzac. I have listened to many Balzac fanatics, my father, the Daudet brothers, Pierre Benoît. Still others. Not one with the manner of Proust. Once more, no didacticism. But rather the impression that you were going to find Balzac himself, that he was surely going to come in, sit down at our table. Isn't that knowing an author? . . . That evening did more than all the rest to bring me back to Balzac, make me read him again with passion."[7] M. Porel's praise is the highest that can be paid to a critic. Not only was Proust able to isolate the characteristic elements of an author, but in so doing could stimulate the sort of enthusiasm that will be remembered many years later.

A recently discovered work which, apparently, was composed shortly after the *Pastiches* (summer, 1909) shows that if Proust had been trying to rid himself of a Balzac obsession he had not yet succeeded. For a couple of years Proust had been thinking of a study on Sainte-Beuve. Sainte-Beuve himself interested him very little. What he saw in him particularly was a vantage point from which to view a century of literature. But Proust had waited too long to write this study which he had done and redone in his mind, even to the immense proportions of "five hundred pages perhaps."[8] What he actually got on paper was a long article on Balzac.

Under the heading "Aimer Balzac" we find a direct discussion of Balzac as a writer. The vulgarity of his sentiments and language is affirmed and demonstrated by numerous examples. Then Proust goes on to make some generalizations regarding characterization and style in the *Human Comedy* that testify to quite close reading and subtle critical acumen. He concludes that in spite of his vulgarity, perhaps because of it, Balzac exercises a charm few writers possess. On almost every point Proust disagrees with Sainte-Beuve, objecting, for example, to the notion that Balzac was chiefly interested in painting faithful portraits. Actually, Proust asserts, Balzac was more given to preconceived ideas and plans for his novels than Flaubert.

The other two fragments already published from this study antici-

[7]Jacques Porel, "Marcel Proust chez Réjane," *La Table ronde*, XXIV, 1950, 91.
[8]Cited by Bernard de Fallois, Introduction to Proust, *Le Balzac de Monsieur de Guermantes*, 14. M. de Fallois, who with Mme Mante-Proust has undertaken to publish the Sainte-Beuve Cahier, presents here three extracts relating to Balzac.

pate the *Remembrance of Things Past*. Instead of attacking his subject directly, Proust created a novelistic setting to carry his comments. The characters he sketched here are none other than those of his future novel, which were beginning to take shape for him. In the piece entitled "Le Balzac de Monsieur Guermantes" we have a scene which will be developed in *Guermantes Way*. In the *Marquise de Cardaillec* we have an early glimpse of Gilberte as a young matron. She has a provincial residence resembling the Hôtel d'Esgrignon of *The Collection of Antiquities* and a garden going down to the river like the one in *The Old Maid*. As prefigurations of the personages of *Remembrance of Things Past*, these portraits merit close study, but their interest for us at the moment is as vehicles of comment on Balzac. Proust created characters to present his criticism and by means of criticism created characters.[9] This mingling of criticism and creative writing has troubled many critics who think of them as separate and diametrically opposed activities. It can be observed here in its most perfect form.

II

Proust's letters demonstrate what a great reader he was. To illustrate or elucidate his thought, he usually turned to literature. "Balzacian" was one of his favourite epithets for describing situations or persons. Also, he complimented his friends (who were always embarrassed by the exorbitant praise which was Proust's notion of politeness) by recklessly comparing their works to Balzac's. To a minor novelist he wrote: "I know you have written greater books, but because I admire the immense fresco of *Lost Illusions* and *A Harlot's Progress*, that does not prevent me from placing at least as high *The Curé of Tours*, or *The Old Maid*, or *The Girl with the Golden Eyes*, and finding the art of these miniatures the equal of the fresco."[10]

Direct allusions to Balzac occur frequently in the volumes of *Remembrance of Things Past*. There are amusing pages where characters, as in the early sketches found in Proust's notebooks, express their opinions concerning Balzac. Mme de Villeparisis, Saint-Loup, Gilberte, M. de Guermantes, all have a word to say. Here literary reference is put to use to delineate character. The characters reveal themselves by their attitude. For example, the aristocratic Mme de Villeparisis reproaches Balzac for claiming to paint the high society that never received him and "of which he has told many unlikely things."[11] But

[9] "Cette manière de cerner la vérité d'un caractère, de mener l'enquête sur un personnage en inspectant d'abord sa bibliothèque, ou en écoutant sa conversation, contient en germe une des plus grandes lois de la psychologie de Proust." Fallois, *ibid.*, 21.

[10] To René Boylesyne. *Correspondance générale* (Paris: Plon, 1933), IV, 152.

[11] *A L'Ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs* (Paris: Gallimard, 1919), II, 169.

it is Charlus who knows Balzac by heart.[12] He loves it all, as he explains in the very words we have just noted in one of Proust's letters. "All one or all the other, the little miniatures like *The Curé of Tours* or *A Forsaken Woman*, or the great frescoes like the series of *Lost Illusions*." Charlus, drawn to Balzac not only because of his art, but because of his depiction of homosexuality, indignantly defends him against Brichot, who treats Balzac as a "long-winded improviser," an "insufficiently meticulous scribe," and dismisses *Lost Illusions* as a trashy newspaper serial, full of bathos and old lumber.[13] The scene develops into magnificent comedy as Charlus is baited into a discussion of Balzac's treatment of sexual perversion.

Proust puts the literary reference to effective use as a sort of frame for the situation he is presenting. Charlus, very much smitten by the novelette *A Princess's Secrets*, cries: "What a masterpiece! How deep, how painful, that bad reputation of Diana, who so fears that the man she loves will discover it. What eternal truth, and more general than it may seem, how far it goes!"[14] Charlus confounds his personal situation in relation to Morel with the one he has found in Balzac. The allusion to Balzac is made so often to situate the baron in characteristic attitudes that it becomes something of a personal symbol or motif.

Deeper than direct allusions and appreciations, the close communion with Balzac is apparent in the very stuff and pattern of *Remembrance of Things Past*. In this novel where one can detect threads of all the great novelists of the nineteenth century, Balzac is probably the most conspicuous. The public which first beheld the successive panels of Proust's vast social tapestry was quick to establish a parallel between it and the *Human Comedy*.[15] To be sure, Proust fell short of Balzac in the dimensions of the work and the "lighting of the picture."[16] The 230 characters in Proust's work represent only about one-tenth of Balzac's repertory. But it promised to be the greatest realistic panorama of society since Balzac. Reading of the salon of the Duchesse de Guermantes, people remembered other salons, such as that of the Duchesse de Langeais. What Balzac had done for the beginning of the nineteenth century, Proust was undertaking for its end, that is to say, analysing customs and vices through the presentation of social tableaux.

[12]In the fragment entitled "Le Balzac de Monsieur de Guermantes," Proust stops just as he is beginning to discuss Charlus. "La personne de la famille sur qui Balzac eut le plus d'influence fut le Marquis. . . ." *Le Balzac de Monsieur de Guermantes*, 51.

[13]*Sodome et Gomorrhe* (Paris: Gallimard, 1922), III, 128. [14]*Ibid.*, 138.

[15]Paul Morand speaks of the "profound correspondences which exist between *Lost Illusions* and *Lost Time*." He fancies Proust lived vicariously in his characters as Balzac did. *Le Visteur du Soir* (Geneva: La Palatine, 1950), 18.

[16]Ramon Fernandez, "La Vie sociale dans l'œuvre de Marcel Proust," *Cahiers Marcel Proust* (Paris: Gallimard, 1927), II, 7.

Balzac had written in the Foreword to the *Human Comedy*: "Does not Society make of man, according to the environment in which he is active, as many different men as there are varieties in zoology? There have then existed, there will then exist, in all times Social Species as there are zoological species." Proust succeeded Balzac as the great naturalist of the human species. It is one of his fundamentals that society is regulated by laws common to the animal kingdom: self-defence, selfishness, cowardice. Likewise, he assimilated social types to biological varieties: "Meanwhile, among the crowd motionless and dissolving into the night, perhaps there was some writer, some *amateur* of human ichthyology, who, observing the jaws of old female monsters close upon a bit of food, would be moved to class them by races, by innate characters and also by acquired characters, which cause an old Serbian lady, whose buccal appendix is that of a great deep sea fish because since her childhood she has inhabited the fresh waters of the Faubourg Saint-Germain, to eat her salad like a La Rochefoucauld."[17] Drawing from biology to depict individuals or patterns of behaviour offers a by-product of powerful caricature. The sustained comparison of the flirtation of Charlus and Jupien with bumble bees and flowers[18] exceeds in grotesqueness the foregoing description of the old Serbian lady.

Charlus and his vice constitute one of Proust's master studies. As the Charlus theme became clearer with the successive volumes of the novel, the interested public recalled in Balzac the example of Vautrin. Here is a bond between the two writers of which Proust was keenly aware. He took comfort from the precedence of Balzac, and felt that he was in a sense his continuer.

Throughout his work, which Pierre Abraham characterizes as a "vast Balzacian dream," there are moments when Proust's communion with Balzac seems particularly intense. Abraham has made a count and plotted a graph to indicate the distribution of Balzac references and echoes during the course of the novel. They reach a peak in *Sodom and Gomorrha* where even the sentences seem patterned after Balzac. Abraham cites specific examples where Proust's imitative gifts betray and confirm his preoccupation with Balzac:

> Balzac frequently uses a demonstrative technique: the revealing element of this procedure is the *this is why*, the repetition of which is so striking in the *Human Comedy*. The demonstrative technique, foreign to the nature and to the art of Proust, does however appear with him. Where? In *Sodom and Gomorrha*, . . .: "From this moment on . . . (Morel) impressed me . . . badly. This is why:" [. . .] "As for Morel, Mme

[17] *A l'Ombre des jeunes filles en fleurs*, II, 113.
[18] *Sodome et Gomorrhe* (Paris: Gallimard, 1920), I.

Verdurin had no need to trace for him an impolite conduct which he had spontaneously, this is why:" The demonstrative form continues for some time. Speaking of Albertine, "I added: when she would confess; this is why." But it soon stops. The last example I have noticed is in *The Captive*: "I was struck . . . by the rather unpleasant odour of rhinogomenol. This is what caused it. . . ."[19]

What accounts for this heavy concentration of reminiscences in *Sodom and Gomorrha*? M. Abraham suggests that after *Swann* had been crowned by the Prix Goncourt and people were comparing its author to Balzac, Proust grew so much accustomed to the parallel that it affected his writing. Letters of the period of *Sodom and Gomorrha* would seem to bear out such a contention, for in spite of his entranced protests against comparisons between his work and the *Human Comedy*, he was indeed thinking of himself in terms of Balzac. In 1921 he wrote facetiously to his editor that he was going to heap upon his new work "all the praises which Balzac, in his correspondence, gives his." When someone suggested composing a dictionary of the proper names in *Remembrance of Things Past*, the one for Balzac seemed the logical model. However, Proust indicated some alterations:

In a Balzac dictionary you find inevitably indications of this sort: Duchesse de Maufrigneuse, afterwards Princesse de Cadignan, in 1811 had invested 20,000 francs on the advice of De Marsay, her lover. In 1827, thanks to the liberalities of Madame, the Princess's fortune rose to an income of 37,000. Now even though remaining on purely social grounds, I should prefer to eliminate this sort of thing as too Balzacian, and put in its stead, for example: Oriane de Guermantes, Princesse des Laumes, then Duchesse de Guermantes, refuses to go to the Iéna's while she is Princesse des Laumes (see *Swann's Way*) then becomes their intimate friend and even wishes to have the Princesse de Parme go to see them (see *Guermantes Way* II).[20]

Proust substitutes snobbery for money as the leavening element in his Vanity Fair.[21]

The rapid falling-off of Balzacian allusion after *Sodom and Gomorrha* may indicate that Proust was again working to free himself from the obsession of Balzac. We know how very worried Proust always was lest his inclination towards imitation obscure his own vision. Also, as Jean Mouton believes, he may have been moved to throw off the Balzac influence out of a sort of fastidiousness. For all his admiration, Proust deplored Balzac's negligences and errors of taste. Mouton says: "Proust is in respect to Balzac like those students who, full of venera-

[19]Pierre Abraham, *Proust* (Paris: Rieder, 1930), 53.

[20]"Lettres inédites"; Léon Pierre-Quint, *Marcel Proust* (Paris: Sagittaire, 1946), 434.

[21]Balzac was indeed a snob, but with Proust snobbery amounted to an instinct, as acute, Lucien Daudet remarked, as that of a homing pigeon!

tion for an old teacher, are a little embarrassed by his careless appearance."[22]

In accounting for the distribution of Balzac echoes in Proust's work, Abraham and Mouton have emphasized subtle and interesting reasons. We need not be told, I suppose, that the chief determining factors are obviously the scope and intent of Proust's work. If it is Balzac's main business to paint society, with Proust it is subordinate to the history of a consciousness. Proust reminds one of Balzac when he is writing social history. But we do not look for Balzac reminiscences in the long pages of semi-automatic writing. Proust's debt to Balzac concerns only one aspect of his work.

To delimit Proust's debt to Balzac is not to minimize its importance. Without Balzac, Proust's notion of humanity and the world could not have been the same. In the microcosm of the *Human Comedy* he found models and prototypes for everything he would encounter in life. When he wished to record what he saw, his expression could not wholly free itself from that of the master of realism. That the greatest French writer of our century should thus reflect and perpetuate him attests to the force and vitality which Balzac has conserved throughout the years.

[22]*Le Style de Marcel Proust*, 42–3.

THE REVOLT OF CHARLES HEAVYSEGE

T. R. Dale

BECAUSE the theories of natural evolution in the physical universe and the findings of the higher criticism on the composition of the Bible came to be all-important in the development of nineteenth-century religious thought, it is easy to regard the "conflict between religion and science," or, more accurately, the conflict between fundamentalist dogma and scientific hypothesis, as mainly responsible for the shifting religious beliefs and attitudes to be found in English literature from 1850 on. In consequence, the part played by humanitarian feeling in this change tends to be somewhat underrated, though humanitarian feeling is more in evidence, especially in imaginative literature. The humanitarian emphasis had, of course, been very prominent in the Romantic period, and was characteristic of the literature of rebellion. Blake and Shelley had revolted against traditional beliefs largely because they felt that the God of the Old Testament was tyrannical and cruel. Their protests had been embodied in legends and inventions not directly related to the Bible itself, but their charges against the authoritarian Jehovah were plain enough. Byron had made much the same charges, and explicitly related them to the Bible in such works as *Cain* and *Heaven and Earth*, in which biblical characters were made to protest against Jehovah's injustice.

These rebels accepted the Old Testament account of God as authentic and were therefore hostile to Him. But in the middle of the century, imaginative writers were more inclined to reject or explain away the statements of the Bible and present a picture of God more in accordance with humanitarian ideas. Thus Philip James Bailey in *Festus* presents the Universalist doctrines that evil is a temporary phenomenon and that all spiritual beings, including even the devil himself, will be eventually reconciled with God. Something akin to this approach may also be seen in the works of the major Victorian poets, who were influenced by new scientific and critical developments as well as by humanitarian feeling.

An interesting contribution to the rebellious tradition of Blake and Byron can be observed in the works of Charles Heavysege (1816-76), the English-born Montreal poet. Like his greater predecessors Heavysege accepted the Bible as true; like them he rebelled against the tyrannous God of the Old Testament. But instead of denouncing the injustice he perceived, he presented a sober and consciously objective account of God's dealings with certain Old Testament characters. So

closely did he follow the biblical narratives on which his chief works were based, so restrainedly did he suggest his criticisms, that no commentators of his own time seem to have been aware of this important theme in his work.

One of the reasons that Heavysege's position has not been understood is the scarcity of his first and most outspoken poem, *The Revolt of Tartarus*, which attracted no attention at the time of publication and was later forgotten even by Heavysege's friends and critics. This curious work, though essentially a pendant to Milton's *Paradise Lost*, and excessively imitative in expression, contains some original and interesting ideas related to humanitarian themes. These are clearly shown in the poem's subject and treatment.

Book First of the six opens:

> Not man's offense primeval, neither man's
> Salvation wrought, nor finally him saved,
> Secure, beatified, upraised to heaven,
> I sing; but beings who, once losing heaven
> Thereto no more return.[1]

The poem deals with two stories: the attempt by the inferior demons of Hell to depose Satan and their other superiors, and the attempts of Satan to seduce and ruin the inhabitants of the Galaxy. Both attempts eventually fail, but circumstances are made to suggest that God's control of the universe is arbitrary and unjust.

In the primary narrative, as Satan is presented throughout in the most unfavourable light and the inferior demons are presented as unfortunate human creatures who desire respite from their sufferings and hope for eventual reconciliation with God, the revolt against Satanic tyranny seems justified and even laudable. Yet, after Satan and his partisans, reinforced by the damned souls of humanity, have been completely overwhelmed, God intervenes to restore the tyrants to power. There is no commentary defending or condemning God's action, but the implication is obvious.

The narrative of Satan's attempts on the people of the Galaxy, an almost comically crude reworking of the temptation story presented in *Paradise Lost*, suggests another criticism of divine providence. Satan, in the course of his journey through the universe, encounters one planet which is physically armoured against his power by a transparent crystal sphere permitting him to see but not reach the happy inhabitants. When he finally reaches the Galaxy he finds people so adequately warned against his wiles that he can make no more pro-

[1] *The Revolt of Tartarus* (Liverpool: D. Marples; London: Simpkin, Marshall, and Company, 1852).

gress with them than Milton's Comus made with the Lady. The people of the Galaxy remain happy, beautiful, and secure in spite of his utmost efforts, and divine intervention defends them from physical harm. The question why Adam and Eve could not have been defended in the same way is not asked, but is obvious.

It is clear that Heavysege retained some interest in the poem, for he revised it very thoroughly, rendering it more Miltonic than ever, and republished it in Canada in 1855. Though this second edition was no more successful than the first, Heavysege did not abandon the idea of implicitly questioning God's justice, but embodied it in a greater and more original poem, *Saul*, which constituted his chief claim to critical significance.

Saul is linked to *The Revolt of Tartarus* by the presence in the action of various demons, one of whom, Malzah, is the familiar spirit and tormentor of Saul himself. In the treatment of these beings Heavysege evinces definite sympathy for them as perpetual underdogs in their conflict with the austere angels. They are represented, in considerable detail, as subject to pain, human emotions, and various physical limitations. More important still, the evil they do of their own accord is trivial—often comical—in effect, but their largest tasks are imposed upon them by God through His agents, the angels. Thus Malzah is compelled to possess and torment Saul. He hates the task, pities Saul, attempts to run away, but is punished and brought back, and is alternately zealous and negligent in tormenting Saul as he himself alternately hopes to finish his task or sympathizes with his victim. Thus, though he is the agent of the hero's downfall, he never loses the reader's sympathy.

Saul himself is presented as a character sometimes to be admired, rarely to be deplored, and always to be pitied. Though Heavysege resolutely deals with every incident in Saul's career as related in the Bible, he carefully provides such motivation for Saul's actions that he appears unfortunate rather than evil. In the first part of the action, from Saul's coronation to the death of Agag, he is motivated by eagerness to do his best for the safety of his people. He acts with decision to defeat his enemies and inspire and unify the Hebrews. His first misdeed is the offering of a sacrifice to God in Samuel's absence. This action is a necessary preliminary to attacking the Philistines and is apologized for effectively by the words:

> 'Tis not the sacrificer but the victim;
> 'Tis not the hand but 'tis the heart God looks at.[2]

[2]*Saul* (Montreal: Henry Rose, 1857), 37.

Samuel, however, denounces Saul's action in violent terms. Saul, it appears, is deposed for his violation of ceremonial law.

Saul's second misdeed, which God punished by removing His favour and by sending Malzah to possess him, is more than excusable in humanitarian terms. Saul is sent to massacre the Amelekites, who have done the Hebrews no harm recently, and reluctantly sets out to perform this distasteful task. The attack is successful, but the cruelty of the subsequent slaughter so sickens Saul, that he confesses to Abner:

> But that I dare not let my thoughts have birth,
> Much less to array those embryo thoughts in words,
> I should deliver me of such conception
> As would appall the reverent ear of men,
> And make me seem, even what I fear I am,
> The Omnipotent's accuser.[3]

In this state of mind he neglects to kill Agag, King of the Amelekites, immediately. Samuel arrives and pronounces God's condemnation of Saul's crime, which does no more than delay Agag's death a few hours. Saul's instinctive mercy thus incurs the most severe punishment. What zeal in the service of God means is powerfully demonstrated by Samuel's butchery of the unfortunate Agag—an incident described in gruesome detail and marvelled at by the very demons. Yet it is at this juncture that Saul's guardian angel announces that she is leaving him, moralizing somewhat smugly:

> On Saul himself resides the blame:
> Saul could not more attention claim:
> A stronger influence from me
> Would have destroyed his liberty.
> His fault was found in his own heart.[4]

The comment, taken in its context, is surely ironical.

In the second and third parts of the poem, the more grievous crimes of Saul are by no means slurred over, but they are shown to be the result of severe temptations, the uncompromising hostility of God and his agents, and the torments inflicted by Malzah. Saul at first struggles against the influences which stage by stage drive him on to evil, but in the course of the action sinks into an unhappy, fatalistic resignation. The implication is clear. Given adequate support, or even freed from the supernatural interference with his life, Saul would have been both righteous and happy. The evil of his later life thus stems from the harsh and unreasonable punishments inflicted on him at the beginning of his career.

Heavysege's determination to present his ideas fairly and in accordance with the facts of the biblical narrative weaken the sceptical effect

[3] *Ibid.*, 64. [4] *Ibid.*, 83.

of his theme so seriously that it does not seem to have been recognized at the time. Coventry Patmore, whose friendly and otherwise discerning review of *Saul* in the *North British Review* brought Heavysege his first important recognition, seems to have read the poem as completely orthodox in tenor. He calls Malzah "the disembodiment of the soul of the . . . King of Israel and a most impressive poetical exposition of the awful truth, that he who is not wholly for God is against Him."[5] The first part of the statement is an obvious blunder, for Malzah is introduced as a separate personality and is the tormentor and, in a sense, the supplanter of Saul's soul; and the latter part is misleading though partly true. God, in *Saul*, does indeed regard anything short of absolute obedience as mortal sin, but Heavysege suggests (and Patmore ignores the suggestion) that God, and not Saul, is at fault.

Heavysege made no immediate protest against this misreading of his work, possibly because he was not inclined to quarrel with his first favourable publicity, but more probably because he was not quite certain how far he should push his questioning of divine justice. The second edition of Saul betrays some uncertainty. On the one hand the altered order of scenes 8 to 15, Act III, First Part (which become scenes 1 to 6, Act V, First Part, in the second edition) makes Saul appear somewhat more aggressively rebellious. On the other, Malzah's influence on Saul throughout the Second Part is made clearer, so that Saul cannot be regarded as wholly responsible for his most serious crimes. One intimation that Heavysege felt that the first edition had been imperfectly understood can be found in the presence of a very brief prefatory note to the second. It reads in part: "For having in an emergency assumed the priestly office, we see him deposed by God. Having failed to execute full judgment on Amelek, we find his deposition confirmed, and himself in the terrible possession of a demon. Under this influence, strengthened by jealousy, we behold him attempting . . . the life of his benefactor, David."[6] The qualifying phrases "in an emergency," "full," "under this influence," here suggest that Heavysege was indeed trying to justify Saul, and the phrase "terrible possession of a demon" at least suggests a certain disproportion between the crime and the punishment. One is tempted to wonder why Heavysege was not more explicit. He may have been reluctant to employ any argument which might appear more personal or biased than the drama of Saul's life as he saw it. And perhaps he was surprised and relieved to find that the orthodox had not denounced him as too favourable to the rebellious Saul.

In *Count Filippo*, a blank-verse drama published in 1860, the year

[5] "The Modern British Drama," *North British Review*, XXIX, Aug., 1858, 79.
[6] *Saul* (Montreal: John Lovell, 1859), v.

after the second edition of Saul, Heavysege again presents a theme of excusable crime and overwhelming punishment but uses non-biblical material. The crime is adultery, and the guilty heroine an essentially pure and innocent young woman. She, like Hardy's Tess, is beset by a conspiracy of chance and natural instinct, and, like Tess, is punished far more severely than the more selfish and culpable characters of the play.

Heavysege, in a prefatory note, states the most obvious part of his theme, but leaves unuttered his indictment of things as they are. He writes: "Next in enormity to a breach of the marriage relation, stands its mutual contraction by youth and years. To give a truthful, though fictitious instance of the sad issue of such an ill-omened union as the latter, is the aim of this drama."[7] The drama is given an Italian setting. Young Hylas, heir to the dukedom of Pereza, is tempted by the lecherous and diabolically crafty Gallantio to seduce Volina, the young and lonely wife of old Count Filippo. Favoured by chance and his own charms, Hylas becomes Volina's companion. Urged on by passion for her, by dislike of Filippo, and by the skilful proddings of Gallantio, he finally succeeds in seducing her. Filippo, who has returned from a journey in disguise to investigate rumours about Volina's behaviour, usurps a priest's function to hear her remorseful confession. The *dénouement* takes place at the ducal palace where punishments are meted out in inverse proportion to the wickedness of the various offenders. The old duke, completely innocent and well-meaning, dies of shock, Volina retires to a life of severe penance in a convent, and Hylas and Filippo suffer penalties of less rigour, while the Iago of the piece, Gallantio, and his lascivious paramour, Paphiana, are magnanimously pardoned.

The unfairness of Volina's fate is very carefully emphasized throughout the action. Probability counts for nothing as the author builds up the case for the defence. When prosy old Filippo leaves her to go on a mission of state, Volina is completely alone except for her neighbour, Paphiana, an habitual adulteress. Hylas establishes a claim on her affection by saving her from a runaway horse. Hylas is an experienced lady-killer, and his genuine love for her adds to the strength of his appeal. And Volina is given some of the most effective lines in the play to appeal against the unnatural laws and conventions which have destroyed her happiness.

The implied protest in *Count Filippo*, then, is directed against the orthodox Christian view of marriage rather than against the will of God as expressed in the Bible. But in *Jephthah's Daughter* (1865) the Bible is again the source of the plot. And the God of the Old Testa-

[7] *Count Filippo: or, The Unequal Marriage* (Montreal: privately printed, 1860).

ment is again suggested (one can hardly say presented) in a sinister aspect.

Heavysege, in adopting this very popular story,[8] stresses above all else human anguish and God's inexorable will. Though ostensibly a narrative, the poem resembles *Saul* and *Count Filippo* in that nearly all of it, and all the most important part of it, is spoken by the characters themselves while the impersonal narrator describes actions and scenes but does not reflect or criticize. As before, he presents the evidence for an unfavourable view of God but leaves the reader to draw his own conclusions.

The poem can be divided into three parts. The first presents Jephthah on his arrival home from the wars, his anguish when he realizes that fulfilling his vow must mean his daughter's death, and his efforts to obtain release from his promise. It shows the strong affection which unites Jephthah, his wife, and their daughter, and the pain which Jephthah's unhappy silence causes when he can neither tell the cause of his grief or appear otherwise than miserable at his homecoming. Unable to find any way out, he tells his family of his vow.

The second part consists of a long debate between Jephthah and his wife and daughter. He points out that the divine law permits no compromise and that his daughter's sacrifice will win her glory in this life and the next. They appeal to Jephthah's love, denounce his legalism, and argue against his interpretation of God's will. The daughter is at last convinced that her father is right and submits to her fate.

In the concluding portion of the poem the daughter prepares for death, only asking the priests for a short respite. Jephthah begs that she may be spared, but the priests solemnly state that if they fail to carry out the oath God will destroy not only Jephthah and his daughter, but the whole nation as well. Under this threat all resistance is given up, and the poem concludes with praise of the girl who willingly sacrifices herself to save others.

Nothing in the poem contradicts the repeated denunciation of the blood sacrifice as a thing evil in itself and doubly horrible in the given circumstances. There is not a word to suggest that God will somehow use the terrible deed for some unknown good purpose, nothing resembling the faith expressed at the end of *Samson Agonistes*:

> All is best, though we oft doubt,
> What th' unsearchable dispose
> Of highest wisdom brings about,
> And ever best found in the close.

[8]Wilbur Owen Sypherd, in *Jephthah and His Daughter* (Newark, Del., 1948), lists thirty-one literary treatments of this story in English alone between 1800 and 1865.

But though the action demanded by divine law is evil, none of the characters question, as Saul did, "whether the Omnipotent be as good as great."[9] Only Jephthah's wife doubts that God wills the sacrifice, and she acquiesces when it seems proved that He does will it. The statement of the priests, that God will destroy the whole nation if this evil action is not committed, is not challenged by anyone. And the concluding lines which praise the heroine describe her as "Enduring an irreparable wrong." It does not appear that a reward in the next life can compensate for the unfairness of her earthly fate.

Heavysege's only other long work, the curious semi-dramatic prose tale, *The Advocate*, has no more than a trace of the questioning theme of all the other works. The story of the gay Montreal lawyer whose illegitimate son causes his destruction fits the conventional pattern of poetic justice only too well—unless we regard his death as too heavy a punishment for his reckless life. But Heavysege himself regarded the book as a failure and destroyed as many copies of it as he could find.

Among the shorter works, the blank-verse narrative poem "Jezebel," published in the *New Dominion Monthly* of January, 1868, adds yet another pointed clause to Heavysege's questionings of Jehovah. Though the poem deals primarily with Jezebel herself, Heavysege finds place in his comparatively short poem for the remarkable story of Ahab's disastrous advance to destruction at Ramoth Gilead. In I Kings : 22, God sends a lying spirit into the Hebrew prophets so that they prophesy victory for Ahab if he attacks the Syrians at Ramoth Gilead. God's purpose is seen by Micaiah, the son of Imiah, who patriotically warns his king against the lying spirit, but Ahab rejects his advice. Heavysege leaves out this extraordinary complication, as he leaves out other parts of the biblical narrative, but retains the lying spirit. And, because the narrative is shortened, this incident follows closely after that of Naboth's vineyard, which is related in considerable detail. Thus God, who has pardoned the humble and remorseful Ahab at the end of the second canto, deceives and kills him, with no new motive, at the beginning of the third canto.

It should be noted that Heavysege wrote on no biblical stories other than those mentioned in this paper and that the three mentioned comprise nearly all his best work. Hence the theme which is common to them and which can also be observed in his other works must be regarded as his dominant idea and possibly the motive which urged this quiet little cabinetmaker on in his courageous literary career.

Yet while this questioning of the God of the Old Testament links Heavysege with Byron and Shelley, Heavysege's method, when it is

[9] *Saul* (1857), 62.

understood, is logically more devastating than the fiery and imaginative denunciations of *Cain* or *Prometheus Unbound*. For Heavysege does not draw on legend or his own imagination to point his criticism of a tyrannical deity, but selects and presents, with at least some show of objectivity, stories from the Bible itself. As the Bible is, by definition, the word of God, the reader must confront, as Heavysege himself did, the dilemma of believing the Bible literally inspired and God Himself a vindictive, tyrannical, even a treacherous deity, or believing God loving and trustworthy, but the Bible not wholly true.

Even while Heavysege was writing, the battle against the narrowly literal interpretation of the Bible was being fought out on other grounds and with very different weapons. Heavysege's contribution was not widely read and was apparently not understood by many of its readers. Yet it has merits which at another time or in another place might have brought its writer fame, notoriety, or even death. It is the simple logic of an unsophisticated man who hated injustice, a humble man who yet dared to see, and dared to write what he saw.

VOLTAIRE'S VIEW OF THE MEANING OF HISTORY

RICHARD M. SAUNDERS

VOLTAIRE spoke for a generation. He was the king of the *philosophes* as Erasmus had been the prince of the humanists. To the men of reason he was guide, leader, and lord. Few men have held the sway over other men's minds that the sage of Ferney maintained over the intelligentsia of Europe during the middle of the eighteenth century. He read their thoughts. He formed their thoughts. His was the voice of the Enlightenment.

Did this leader of men's thoughts seek to find meaning in human history? If so, what did he find? These are important questions that must be answered by anyone who wishes to assess the driving force behind a generation that, wittingly or not, was striding the road which led to the gates of revolution. Voltaire spoke the mind of this generation. If he found meaning in history it was the gospel to which they, the men of reason, subscribed. Out of a gospel, out of religion, men find motives for action. And the Enlightenment was no age of inaction.

Voltaire, who reacted quickly and violently against traditional schooling, and all semblance of orthodoxy in ideas, began early to absorb the views current in the salons, and to delve into the books in vogue amongst men and women of fashion. This was the era of Locke and Newton. Behind them stood Bacon and Descartes, Galileo and a host of others. The advances of a century in science, mathematics, and philosophy were bringing the age of the Renaissance, the age of secular man, to a new zenith. A revolution was preparing in men's minds. Voltaire, like many another youth in his day, was fascinated, swept off his feet by the surge of new ideas, ideas full of hope, optimism, progress. Voltaire drank in the thoughts of the great thinkers of the age. He became their apostle. A missionary was born, who with deft and cunning touch spread the new ideas abroad. So clear, so shrewd, so witty were his tongue and pen that soon he became the mentor of multitudes the creative thinkers could not reach. The age of Locke and Newton gave way to the age of Enlightenment, the age of Voltaire.

Variety, versatility, and ease of expression mark the work of the Apostle of Enlightenment. Few are the forms of written expression unattempted by his facile mind. And all are the bearers of the message he was bringing to men. Of all his work none was more successful, and none was more impregnated with his chosen message, than his historical writings. So great, indeed, was his influence in this field that Voltaire has been called "the father of modern history."

What is meant by this in the first instance is modern historiography. It is a tribute to Voltaire's insistence upon a broadening of the scope of history to include the hitherto-neglected social, economic, and cultural aspects of history. For the old type of histories that were so often a mere list of names and dates he had no use, asserting that "Si vous n'avez autre chose à nous dire, sinon qu'un barbare a succédé à un autre barbare sur les bords de l'Oxus et de l'Iaxartes, en quoi êtes-vous utile au public?"[1] Of the modern historian something much more than that is required. As he says, "On exige des historiens modernes plus de détails, des faits plus constatés, des dates précises, des autorités, plus d'attention aux usages, aux lois, aux mœurs, au commerce, à la finance, à l'agriculture, à la population; il en est de l'histoire comme des mathématiques et de la physique: la carrière s'est prodigieusement accrue."[2]

From the above it may be seen that Voltaire saw the modern historian as not only required to broaden his field of interest but also called upon to be more exact, more accurate in his use of authorities, of the source materials of history, in his statement of facts. He was particularly emphatic about the need of relying upon carefully checked contemporary documents. To these refinements in historical methodology the title, "father of modern history" is a tribute.

Voltaire was not, however, writing history merely for the pleasure of recording past events. To him history, like poetry, drama, oratory, indeed, all forms of expression, was to be the bearer of a message, a weapon in the war for Enlightenment. Broadening the scope of historical research, and making historical writing more accurate were not ends in themselves but means to an end. So effective was Voltaire's use of history that his histories became one of the main channels through which his generation was imbued with the Enlightenment to which he had given himself. Not only his generation, either, for the message conveyed through these histories has been handed on from generation to generation. It has become a part of the warp of modern thought. In view of this, the title, "father of modern history," might well designate the success with which Voltaire was able to mark the discipline of history with the burden of his message, his philosophy of history.

The idea of a philosophy of history was manifestly not the product of Voltaire's mind, but the phrase itself, "philosophy of history," was. The piece, which since 1769 has stood as the Introduction to the *Essai sur les mœurs*, and which, according to Voltaire, was written for Mme du Châtelet, was first published in 1765 under the title, *La Philosophie*

[1] "Histoire," *Dictionnaire philosophique*, in *Œuvres* (Paris, 1879), XIX, 367.
[2] *Ibid.*, 365.

de l'histoire, par feu l'Abbé Bazin. It was dedicated to Catherine II of Russia, "Protectrice des arts et des sciences, digne par son esprit de juger des anciennes nations, comme elle est digne de gouverner la sienne."[3] It has been stated that Voltaire was not seeking general laws through the study of history but merely wished to paint a comprehensive historical picture. With this view I cannot agree. His very use of the term, "philosophy of history," points in the other direction. Moreover, a careful investigation of his writings on and about history reveals clearly, it seems to me, that Voltaire did believe that it was possible to discover, and that he had discovered, through the study of history the answer to the question, What is the meaning of history? If he did not present his conclusions in a well-organized and formal manner they are none the less evident. Indeed he opens the *Philosophie de l'histoire* with the statement, "Vous voudriez que des philosophes eussent écrit l'histoire ancienne, parce que vous voulez la lire en philosophe. Vous ne cherchez que des vérités utiles, et vous n'avez guère trouvé, dites-vous, que d'inutiles erreurs. Tâchons de nous éclairer ensemble; essayons de déterrer quelques monuments précieux sous les ruines des siècles."[4] What then were these "useful truths," these "precious monuments" which Voltaire proposed to unearth? For in them we will find his answer to the basic question of the meaning of history.

The fundamental truth which he discovers is that there is an all-embracing system of nature to which man and the earth belong. "Cette nature," he tells us, "est toujours et partout la même."[5] Behind and above this system of nature is God the Creator and upholder.

The knowledge of God, he affirms, is both instinctive and rational. All primitive peoples are imbued by nature with the realization that there is a Being superior to man though they may not know or understand all the arguments which can be advanced to support this belief. Wholly absorbed by the hard task of sustaining life "ils ne pouvaient connaître ces rapports de toutes les parties de l'univers, ces moyens et ces fins innombrables, qui annoncent aux sages un éternal architecte."[6] The evidence shows, however, that primitive societies everywhere have this conviction of the existence of God. It also shows that when men of reason consider the question they arrive at the same conviction. Thus in Rome ". . . Cicéron et tous les philosophes, et tous les initiés, reconnaissaient un dieu suprême et tout-puissant. Ils étaient tous revenus,

[3]"Avertissement de Beuchot" for *Essai sur les mœurs* cited in *Œuvres* (Paris, 1879), XI, viii.
[4]Introduction to *Essai sur les mœurs, Œuvres*, XI, 3.
[5]*Ibid.*, 10. [6]*Ibid.*, 11.

par la raison, au point dont les hommes sauvages étaient partis par instinct."[7]

This system of nature created by the Eternal Architect is ordered and maintained in accordance with "the eternal laws of nature." These are fixed, unalterable, and universal. To a man of reason it is evident that ". . . tout est lié en l'univers par des chaines que rien ne peut rompre"; and that ". . . Dieu étant immuable, ses lois sont aussi; et qu'une roue de la grande machine ne peut s'arrêter, sans que la nature entière soit dérangée."[8] Man thus lives inside of a great machine; indeed, is a part of that machine. However, he is not, or need not be, a blind cog in that machine for if he will only use the reason, the common sense with which he is endowed, he will be able to comprehend the true basis of his existence, and the character of the laws established by his Creator.

The eternal laws of nature which rational man may know, and to which he is subject, are not limited to the laws of physical nature. True, man is a part of the physical universe. Voltaire points this out in discussing the normal span of human life, where he emphasizes that "comme les animaux, les arbres, et toutes les productions de la nature, ont toujours eu la même durée, il est ridicule de nous excepter."[9] None the less, man is more than a physical being. He is a rational and moral being. And the natural laws, "communes à tous, et utiles à tous,"[10] extend to this sphere also. Man is endowed with virtue as well as reason. Among the natural laws of morality Voltaire includes the following: "Tu ne voleras ni ne tueras ton prochain; tu auras un soin respectueux qui t'ont donné le jour et qui ont élevé ton enfance; tu ne raviras pas la femme de ton frère, tu ne mentiras pas pour lui nuire; tu l'aideras dans ses besoins, pour mériter d'en être secouru à ton tour." These, he says, are the laws that "la nature a promulguées du fond des îles du Japon aux rivages de notre occident." They are ". . . des vérités gravées dans tous les cœurs."[11] Man is therefore innately virtuous by the gift of God and as a part of the system of nature.

It follows that natural religion consists in the recognition and acceptance by man of the system of nature established by God, and in the practice of the virtue which is inherent in man endowed with reason. This the sages of all times and places have known and done. To these basic elements of natural religion Voltaire added a belief in immortality and in God's justice or vengeance, a scheme of rewards and punishments. Although he ridicules the idea of the existence of

[7] *Ibid.*, 14.
[8] *Ibid.*, 94.
[9] *Ibid.*, 7.
[10] *Ibid.*, 155.
[11] *Ibid.*, 155-6.

a corporeal soul as the product of dream psychology, the natural reasoning of ignorance beginning to reason, he insists that one cannot stress too much "the historical truth" that everywhere dawning reason believed in a supreme God and immortality.[12] The concept of the after life and the belief in God's justice he asserts are "useful truths" which have been utilized by almost all the great legislators of the past, with the astonishing exception of the Chinese who perfected morality, "la première des sciences," and of Moses.[13]

Unhappily not all men, though endowed with reason, recognize the fundamental truths. Where is the country, asks Voltaire, "qui n'ait pas eu une foule de superstitieux et un petit nombre de sages?"[14] Does one not know that in every country "le vulgaire est imbécile, superstitieux, insensé? N'y a-t-il pas eu des convulsionnaires dans la patrie du chancelier de L'Hospital, de Charron, de Montaigne, de La Motte-le-Vayer, de Descartes, de Bayle, de Fontenelle, de Montesquieu? N'y a-t-il pas des méthodistes, des moraves, des millénaires, des fanatiques de toute espèce, dans le pays qui eut le bonheur de donner naissance au chancelier Bacon, à ces génies immortels, Newton et Locke, et à une foule de grands hommes?"[15]

Thus is the world divided into the wise and the foolish, the enlightened few and the vulgar crowd. It is, and always has been the role of the enlightened, the "*philosophes,*" to lead, or to bring back men to reason and to virtue. One may wonder why man endowed with reason needs either to be led on to reason or to be brought back to reason, but Voltaire repeatedly emphasizes that the proper use of reason and its product, true civilization, come very slowly. Ordinary men learn from wise men. One nation learns from another, and all this takes a long time. Voltaire also insists that common sense or reason may be perverted by passion, by emotion. "C'est ainsi que l'amour du merveilleux, et l'envie d'entendre et de dire des choses extraordinaires, a perverti le sens commun dans tous les temps."[16] Hence the enlightened have this twofold function, to educate men in the proper use of reason, and to defend them against the errors born of passion. This may best be done in a country where reason is untrammelled, and thought free. Such a country and such a people will outstrip all others. Look at the ancient Greeks. With them ". . . l'accès de la raison fut ouvert à tout le monde; chacun donna l'essor à ses idées, et c'est ce qui rendit les Grecs le peuple le plus ingénieux de la terre." Or look at the English today. "C'est ainsi que de nos jours la nation

[12] *Ibid.*, 78.
[13] *Ibid.*, 59.
[14] *Ibid.*, 67.
[15] *Ibid.*, 79.
[16] *Ibid.*, 93.

anglaise est devenue la plus éclairée parce qu'on peut penser impunément chez elle."[17]

This then is the meaning of history as Voltaire sees it. There is a system of nature established by God which man endowed with reason may know and to which he may accord his life and his society. If he does, civilization and progress will prevail. But he can do this only if enlightened men are allowed to guide ordinary men in a *milieu* of free thought and expression.

It may well be argued that this interpretation of history, this "meaning," was never derived from history by Voltaire, but was assumed by him on other grounds and then imposed upon history. This may be so. Yet if it is so then it must be added that Voltaire clearly believes that a proper study of history can and does in fact demonstrate the validity of this interpretation or philosophy of history. And it is this conviction which leads him to call for broadening the field of historical investigation. If nature is always and everywhere the same, then evidence from the history of all peoples and all kinds of people in all times and places will bear this out. Hence the study of the history must be extended in a chronological and a geographical sense as well as into social and cultural spheres. The *Essai sur les mœurs* and its Introduction, with the discussion therein of the Chinese, the Indians, the Chaldeans, and of numerous other peoples and times previously neglected, with the emphasis upon manners and ideas, is Voltaire's demonstration of how historical study may be broadened, and of the conclusions to be derived from such new history.

Coupled with the idea of the presentation of the truth through a proper study and writing of history is the strong belief that such a process will be useful to men. Indeed, the only justification for writing history is that it is useful if properly done. What sort of history is useful? asks Voltaire. He answers, "Celle qui nous apprendrait nos devoirs et nos droits, sans paraître prétendre à nous les enseigner."[18] This view rules out a mere chronicling of names and dates, a conventional record of battles and reigns of kings. Let compilers repeat the stories of Marathon and Salamis, says Voltaire. They are well enough known. "Je m'attacherai à d'autres objets."[19] He then goes on to discuss the ideas, especially the religious ideas, of famous Greek legislators. He also insists upon the great utility of the history of invention and progress in the arts and crafts. Such broader history is useful especially to men of state who can guide the development of their country by comparison

[17] *Ibid.*, 76.
[18] "Histoire," *Œuvres*, XIX, 354.
[19] Introduction to *Essai sur les mœurs*, *Œuvres*, XI, 73–4.

with what has happened in other countries: "C'est ce qui excite l'émulation des nations modernes dans les arts, dans l'agriculture, dans le commerce."[20] Of highest use, too, is the presentation through history of good examples as guides, and bad examples as warnings. As good examples he cites Henri IV's careful financial preparation for his great war, Elizabeth's successful defence against Philip II on the basis of sound trade and economy, and the value of Louis XIV's system of border fortresses, proven in the War of the Spanish Succession. Such examples, he says, ". . . font un grand effet sur l'esprit d'un prince qui lit avec attention."[21] The display of bad examples in history is, perhaps, even more important. "Les grandes fautes passées servent beaucoup en tout genre; on ne saurait trop remettre devant les yeux les crimes et les malheurs. On peut, quoi qu'on en dise, prévenir les unes et les autres. . . ."[22] He lays particular stress on the need of revealing the evils of the Papacy, and of religious persecution and war, and he sees the study of history as a preventive against the recurrence of such calamities of the times of ignorance. "Anéantissez l'étude de l'histoire, vous verrez peut-être des Saint-Barthélemy en France, et des Cromwell en Angleterre."[23]

This is the point of view of an apostle of Enlightenment. History is an instrument of education. Through its study men are to be shown the truth and to be guided into the path of reason. With Voltaire the emphasis in the writing of history is overwhelmingly on the negative side. To him the educational or useful function of history is fundamentally a destructive one, to free men's minds from error, superstition, and ignorance. It is a weapon in the battle against *l'infâme*. His is a witty and caustic pen, and the fight is on. The pages of his histories are crammed with sly and cunning innuendoes, with scarcely veiled comparisons, or with open attacks upon all that he considers irrational. The bulk of his spleen is vented upon the advocates and the record of revealed religion. In this respect the *Essai sur les mœurs* and its Introduction are outstanding examples. The latter, for instance, is devoted to a strenuous effort to show through proper historical study, which in this case includes a good deal of comparative religion, that the Jews can hardly be regarded as God's chosen people by any reasonable man, and that to regard their history, the Bible, as divinely inspired is absurd. It is worth noting that Voltaire does not hesitate to make use of anti-Semitism to carry his point. His face-saving disavowals of any intent to attack revealed religion, of course, fooled no one. Indeed

[20] "Histoire," *Œuvres*, XIX, 356–7.
[21] *Ibid.*, 357.
[22] *Ibid.*
[23] *Ibid.*, 358.

they were shrewdly devised to accentuate his argument, and to exercise his wit.

The implication of all this is that when men's minds are adequately freed of ignorance and error, and when the enlightened, by virtue of the unfettered use of reason, become the natural and rightful leaders of society, then men will have entered upon the road of right reason, and the gates of progress will be open. In consequence historians should concern themselves primarily with describing how men have developed in the proper use of reason, and what useful results have happened therefrom.

Despite the utility of universal history in providing evidence of the operation of natural laws this point of view caused Voltaire to discover a far greater use in the study of modern history than in that of any other period. The reason for this was that the further one went back in history, except for the happy ages of Augustus and Pericles, the more one was plunged into fable and superstition, and if the study of these evidences of error was useful to show the results of man's misuse of reason, it was useless to educate man in the proper use of reason. For instance, take the early medieval period in France. "Si nous jetons les yeux sur les premiers temps de notre histoire de France," said Voltaire, "tout en est peut-être aussi faux qu'obscur et dégoûtant."[24] It was not until the thirteenth century that ". . . nous commençames à raisonner."[25] The history of this earlier period, he says, ". . . ne mérite plus d'être écrite que celle des ours et des loups."[26] On the other hand, now that men have begun again to reason and enlightenment is under way, progress has become more and more rapid. "Il n'y a point de peuple en Europe qui n'a fait, en dernier lieu, plus de progrès en un demi-siècle dans tous les arts qu'il n'en avait fait depuis les invasions des barbares jusqu'au quatorzième siècle."[27]

Since in his opinion the greatest advance in the right use of reason had been made in the most recent period it was natural that Voltaire should throw the weight of his effort in historical writing into that period. Thus *Le Siècle de Louis XIV* crowns his meditations upon universal history. Men have once again entered upon the road of reason. They have found the method of rightly conducting the reason. Ignorance and error are being dissipated. The way to the future is open. The apostle of the Enlightenment has become the herald of progress. His disciple, Condorcet, will soon push another stage up the hill of progress and announce the coming of utopia. The meaning of

[24]Introduction to *Essai sur les mœurs*, *Œuvres*, XI, 153. [25]*Ibid.*, 76.
[26]Cited by Villemain in "Avertissement" to *Essai sur les mœurs*, in *Ibid.*, vi.
[27]*Ibid.*, 55, 56.

history will become, then, that man in possession of the method of rightly using the reason is advancing to perfection on earth. Under the guidance of Voltaire and the *philosophes* the gospel of progress was preached abroad. It captured the hearts of countless men. This was an age of optimism such as the world had never known.

No one doubts, I believe, that it was Voltaire, the herald of progress, who made the greatest impact upon educated and literate Europeans of the eighteenth century. Nor can it be doubted, I think, that the Apostle of Enlightenment desired to make just such an impression. Through reason to peace, justice, and good will amongst men seems to have been his programme. None the less Voltaire is himself no utopian. And by following another line of reasoning in his writings one may come to a quite other outlook, to a very different meaning of history, than did the great bulk of his followers.

If it was Voltaire's faith in reason which led him to the point where his willing readers could see utopianism in his pages it was his steady advocacy of doubt which points in the opposite direction. In 1768 Voltaire published a study on *Le Pyrrhonisme de l'histoire* in which he affirms, ". . . je ne veux ni un pyrrhonisme outré, ni une crédulité ridicule. . . ."[28] A studied balance between doubt and conviction, such as is indicated here, was indeed Voltaire's ideal. He probably felt that he had attained it for himself, and that it was a position which all men of reason might reach and maintain. On the other hand the continual recurrence of evidence of extreme doubt in Voltaire's works leads one to wonder whether the great popularizer of the faith in reason and progress felt so secure in this position after all. Moreover, if one pursues this line of enquiry further, it is to come to the query, Does Voltaire's doubt not approach a state of completeness which wholly nullifies the progressive and optimistic outlook ordinarily associated with his name?

One element in Voltaire's doubt is his lack of faith in ordinary people. His undemocratic attitude is too well known to lay stress upon it here. He concentrated upon the enlightenment of rulers and of those in the upper ranks of society. If there was to be progress it would come, as he saw it, from the top downwards. How far down it would eventually reach, and how long the process would take remained entirely problematical. Certainly it would be an orderly, rational, and gradual development. By its nature as the work of men of reason it could not be catastrophic. It seems most likely that Voltaire felt that the best guarantee of continued progress in civilization would be found in the indefinite control of society by the enlightened few. Had he ever known that the day would come when his name, his words, his gospel of man

[28] *Œuvres*, VI, 235.

endowed with reason, would be used as watchwords to rouse the *demos* into violent revolution he would have been bitterly horrified. Though we may pass over the social and political implications of Voltaire's aristocratic outlook we must give full weight to the profound doubt of human nature from which it springs.

Nature, Voltaire assures us, is everywhere and always the same, and man is a part of the system of Nature. He utilizes the study of history to set forth evidence in favour of this view. It is therefore important to note that in his examination of the historical record of humanity he finds that "L'homme en général, a toujours été ce qu'il est . . .";[29] and that ". . . le gros du genre humain a été et sera très longtemps insensé et imbécile."[30] If history is a science, as Voltaire and the *philosophes* considered it to be, then the "facts" discovered by historians must become the starting point, the initial knowledge, from which they can and will draw general conclusions. Voltaire did not evade the record of history. Hence, beside the fact that every country, every age, has had its enlightened few is placed the fact that in all times and places the mass of men has been senseless and stupid. In view of Voltaire's basic assumption that Nature is everywhere and always the same; since man is a part of that system of Nature, and since the study of the history of man brings Voltaire to the above general conclusions it is difficult to see how any programme of education and enlightenment, no matter how tactful or prolonged, is going to overcome this aspect of the system of Nature. If, as Voltaire says, God refuses to perform miracles, that is, to interfere with the laws of nature, can man be expected to do so? Hence, the "very long time" during which Voltaire foresees the mass of men remaining as they are lengthens towards infinity. If history shows man always to have been such as he is, one is driven towards the conclusion that perhaps he always will be as he is. What then about enlightenment and progress?

But Voltaire did not place his hopes on the stupid, common man. Progress lay in the hands of the aristocracy of the intelligentsia, with the enlightened few. Assure them of control and all would be well. Yet there are occasions when Voltaire doubts even the wisdom and leadership of the enlightened. For instance, when he is discussing the history of magic, he states: "On a dit que le consentement de tous les hommes était une preuve de la vérité. Quelle preuve! Tous les peuples ont crus à la magie, à l'astrologie, aux oracles, aux influences de la lune. Il eût fallu dire au moins que le consentement de tous les sages était, non pas une preuve, mais une espèce de probabilité. Et quelle probabilité encore! Tous les sages ne croyaient-ils pas, avant Copernic,

[29]Introduction to *Essai sur les mœurs*, *Œuvres*, XI, 18.
[30]*Ibid.*, 102.

que la terre était immobile au centre du monde?"[31] If the sages, if the enlightened, can themselves fall into error and stay in ignorance for long periods of history, as is here suggested, it is hard to believe that they can be relied upon, in any permanent or consistent way, to lead the stupid masses towards the new age of reason. They might, in fact, do what Voltaire tells us the Chinese intellectual *élite* did, namely, ". . . abandonnèrent le peuple aux superstitions des bonzes,"[32] on the grounds that a coarse religion would naturally suit their coarse habits and outlook. Thus the basis was laid for a permanent division of society, for the permanent domination of the common man by those who know, the experts, the enlightened. So even they, it seems, cannot always be counted upon; and if they cannot what becomes of the meaning of history as the story of the progress of rational man, under the guidance of enlightened men, toward the utopia of rational society? It is perhaps considerations of this sort which drive Voltaire on occasion into the depths of despair from which he utters the amusedly cynical dictum of *Candide*, "Il faut cultiver notre jardin." Why not? For along this line of reasoning there is nothing more to be found in the study of history than a record of meaningless change. There is no meaning in history.

In conclusion, then, there is a dualism in Voltaire's philosophy of history. By following one avenue of approach Voltaire was able to foresee indefinite progress ahead of man, and to see the meaning of history as the story of the progress of the unfolding of reason in rational man. By stressing, on the other hand, the frailty of human nature, as revealed in recorded history, he was driven towards despair, and the conviction that there is no meaning in history. If the weight of belief in Voltaire's mind, and in the outlook of the *philosophes*, whose "king" he was, lay heavily upon the first point of view the second possibility was always there to trouble their thoughts. If the record of future history should continue to reveal the permanency of human weakness, and the enlightened should not win over human nature the triumphs which the heralds of progress proclaimed they would, then posterity, the arbiter of all history, could indeed say, "You Voltaire were wrong in the first case, but right in the second. There is no progress. You yourself have said it. Men are everywhere and always the same. The changes you record in your history books signify nothing. There is no meaning in history." Voltaire's positive philosophy of history contains within itself the kernel of its own negation for he makes it depend upon an appeal to the record of history on the pages of which he sees written the story of the influence of blind instinct and evil passion, the impress of futility.

[31] *Ibid.*, 102. [32] *Ibid.*, 58.

SOME EURIPIDEAN TECHNIQUES IN THE DRAMATIC TREATMENT OF MYTH

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IT is well known that the Greek tragedian was not expected to think up his own "story" and that the plots of most of the great Greek tragedies were based on well-established myths, which might be used time and again by different tragedians. This situation poses certain interesting questions for the reader of Greek tragedy. Was it a help or a hindrance in dramatic composition? How did this or that dramatist go about adapting the given material to the expression of his own conception of the tragic? What are some of the different ways in which old myths can be constantly revivified with new meanings?

For philosophic dramatists such as Aeschylus and Euripides, there are certain advantages in using old myths in the expression of new ideas. For one thing, the dramatist is able to say: "Look, what I have to tell you can be demonstrated in this situation which you all know." His ideas acquire more authority when they can be represented by a myth which has already attained something of the grandeur of an archetype. Moreover, by projecting his ideas beyond his own environment and experience into a set of circumstances fixed in the distant past, he acquires the appearance, at least, of detachment; his demonstration is the more impressive in the same way that a small boy's trial of his boat is more impressive if it is conducted in the impersonal river, rather than in the family tub.

A second attractive feature of myths for our philosophic tragedian is their infinite potentiality for new meanings. Viewed as tragic material, a myth supplies the dramatist with certain well-known and often catastrophic happenings in the lives of famous personages of old. For the Greeks, particularly, with their horror of *Tyche* or Chance, it was unthinkable that such mighty events, hallowed by tradition, had no meaning. Now saga was the earliest repository of these ancient tales and saga is wont to dwell more on the "what happened" than on the "why." Sometimes, explanations might actually be given in the myth, but if so, they were usually given in the unintellectual terms proper to it; for example, "such and such happened, because the goddess Hera was angry." But the real answers, the expressions of underlying significance, belong properly to the individual tragedian, and these must, in turn, depend on his individual view of life. Here, too, is where his individual techniques in the use of myth must be put to work.

A detailed discussion of Euripides' dramatic treatment of myth would be beyond the scope of a single paper. Hence, I propose to limit the present discussion to a study of four plays exhibiting two distinct approaches of the dramatist to his given material. The myths of the four plays to be discussed are all fundamentally concerned with the activities of the gods in the lives of men, and each of them when subjected to "the Euripidean treatment" is made to express something of the poet's own convictions about what was significant and what nonsensical in traditional beliefs. In the *Hippolytus* and the *Bacchae* the emphasis is on the former of these two elements: in them he does what we have suggested that the "philosophical dramatist" must do when he is treating myth seriously; while he skilfully disposes of the literal meaning of the myth concerned, he respects its action and expresses his own meanings through it. In the case of melodramas such as the *Helen* and, to a lesser extent, the *Iphigenia in Tauris*, on the other hand, he comes at myth from the other direction, at it were; far from "saving the myth," he exaggerates its literal meanings to the point of parody and lets the remarks of his human characters show up the ridiculous nature of the gods *as they are represented in the myth*.

Much has already been written on Euripides' attitudes to traditional beliefs; in the present paper, however, we are concerned primarily with the dramatic techniques by which he expressed these attitudes in plays based on traditional myths.

The first two plays we are to consider are dramatic studies in human passions, based on myths of divine revenge. The *Hippolytus* and the *Bacchae*, though separated in time by over twenty years, show interesting parallels in the dramatist's approach to this type of myth and in the meanings which he expresses through them. Hence, they have certain devices in common; their differences in dramatic treatment, on the other hand, will be found to reflect the different courses followed by their respective gods: Aphrodite, goddess of love, works intimately, through individuals; Dionysus excites the thundering herd.

The plot of Euripides' *Hippolytus* may be briefly summarized. Hippolytus, the bastard son of King Theseus, offends Aphrodite by his too exclusive worship of Artemis, goddess of chastity. In revenge, Aphrodite plots his destruction by causing Phaedra, Theseus' wife, to fall in love with her stepson, Hippolytus. Despite Phaedra's noble resolve to die rather than reveal her guilty passion, Hippolytus discovers it, owing to the would-be good offices of a meddling old nurse. Humiliated by a contemptuous tirade from Hippolytus, Phaedra, just before she slays herself, writes a letter to Theseus in which she incriminates Hippolytus as her seducer. Theseus, on his return from abroad, believes

the letter, confronts Hippolytus, and curses him with one of the three effective curses long ago granted him by the god Poseidon. Soon the news is brought that Hippolytus is dying, destroyed by the bolting of his own beloved horses, when they are terrified by a sea-monster as they race along the strand. In the final scene, Artemis appears to Theseus and to Hippolytus, as the latter is dragged dying on the stage. The hero learns that all has been caused by a vengeful Aphrodite, "jealous of her slighted honour, vexed at thy chaste life." As a consolation to her worshipper, Artemis promises Hippolytus that he will be honoured evermore in Troëzen (the locale of the tragedy) by maidens, before their marriage. The rite described is obviously a real Troëzenian rite for which Euripides here supplies an explanation.

The Hippolytus myth[1] seems to have been of a curiously synthetic nature—that is to say, the personalities involved enjoyed, originally, an existence independent of one another and were brought together by the natural tendency to relate, within a single myth, independent cults and heroes connected with one place, in this case Troëzen, on the borders of Attica. Hippolytus does not appear as the son of Theseus in the lyric poets' celebrations of the latter. When Theseus, descended from Troëzenian royalty, became prominent in Attic mythology (for national-political reasons) it was natural that local tradition should associate him with Hippolytus, a Troëzenian cult hero, celebrated (possibly as Artemis' priest) for his purity. Theseus' former liaison with the Amazon Antiope was, therefore, twisted into a liaison with Hippolyta, the Amazon Queen, and Hippolytus was then considered their son. It is also known that Aphrodite and Artemis, as well as Hippolytus, had shrines at Troëzen. The opposed cults of the former and the latter two would inevitably lead to conflict, reflected in local legend. For one goddess to "get at" the other through human votaries, a passionate human element was needed. As the wife of Theseus, Phaedra, coming from a family traditionally crossed by Aphrodite, was well suited to the role which would effect the divine revenge motif in a myth connecting Hippolytus and Theseus.

Some such myth as this is generally imputed by scholars to a local Troëzenian poet; it was probably composed late in the sixth century, if Polygnotus' depiction of Phaedra, in a painting of the early fifth century, was derived from it. At any rate, Greek tragedians were not

[1]For fuller discussions of the conclusions summarized here, cf. L. Meridier, *Hippolyte d'Euripide* (Paris, Librairie Mellottée, n.d.), 62 ff.; L. Séchan, "La Légende d'Hippolyte dans l'Antiquité," *Revue des Etudes Grecques*, XXIV, 1911, 105 ff.; L. Farnell, *Greek Hero Cults* (Oxford, 1921), 64. Cf. also Plutarch (*Life of Theseus*, 28) who appears to regard Greek tragedy as mainly responsible for the literary development of this myth.

given to making up myths of whole cloth and we know that Sophocles, as well as Euripides, wrote a tragedy on this theme.

What Euripides has done with this myth of divine revenge is to take the two "god-ridden" human figures and, while preserving much of their original significance, set them in a situation symbolizing warring psychological or emotional forces within man. As in other tragedies of his, he follows a technique of isolation, allowing each figure to represent only one impulse or force and that to an extreme degree. Hippolytus will have none of Aphrodite, and he suffers; Phaedra, despite her valiant efforts, is, in the crucial moments of the play, almost "all Aphrodite," and she suffers. On Euripides' showing, then, this is a force which is equally dangerous when coldly ignored and when in complete control. Since the tragedy is not Phaedra's, *her* plight is not presented as the result of her character; Euripides was not given to developing a double tragic theme within one drama.

In what happens to Hippolytus, on the other hand, we see the result, inevitable and tragic, of the whole of his one-sided personality. Hippolytus' actual rejection of his stepmother's love is, as any Greek, including Euripides, would agree, a virtuous not a vicious act: it is *how* he makes the rejection which is significant. Similarly, Hippolytus' rejection of Aphrodite is not a tragic flaw, a single fault in a good man: it is an essential part of the whole man.[2] Hippolytus is represented as a cultist, with all the exclusive intolerance, the narcissism, and self-righteousness which the term implies. His worship of Artemis, his ideal of chastity, includes (as often in real life) a certain ascetic form of the cult of the body: athleticism, outdoorishness, riding, hunting (Artemis is also goddess of the hunt), all feverishly pursued to the exclusion of, or as a substitute for, other more "worldly" forms of activity. His company is limited to that of other youths similarly dedicated. But, most fatal of all, his very virtue, chastity, leads, in his smug and haughty character, to a misunderstanding of virtue as a whole.

These meanings are a long way from the simple myth of divine revenge. However, true to the conventions of Greek drama, the plot—"the what and why" of the dramatic action, on the literal level—does follow the myth. To express his own meanings within this framework, then, Euripides must present the divine agents, the victims, and the reactions of the minor characters and chorus in such a way that we cannot simply accept the literal statements of the myth or the plot. His way of doing this is to weaken the divinity of the goddesses con-

[2]Cf. H. D. F. Kitto, *Greek Tragedy* (2nd ed., London, 1950), 202 ff.; also 188 ff. where Kitto's discussion of Medea expresses more clearly the point suggested above.

cerned and to show in the human victims the seeds of their own destruction. I propose now to suggest some three or four devices by which Euripides achieves this.

The first device is a bold one—and it is one which Euripides uses over and over again in his plays. It is the simple trick of ruining an idea by an overbold statement of it. In the prologue, Aphrodite is made to state in no uncertain, but quite ungodlike, terms just what is going to happen in this play and why. Thus:

> I honour those who respect my powers but I ruin those who "think big" [*φρονοῦσιν εἰς ἡμᾶς μέγα*] with respect to me. (ll. 5–6)

The details of her planned revenge Aphrodite tells with relish; the innocence of Phaedra, the unfairness of her infatuation, shame, and death, she recognizes—and dismisses thus:

> Phaedra, of good name though she be, still must perish. I will not reckon the wrong to her as more to be considered than the satisfaction of my just revenge. (ll. 47 ff.)

In Homer, such words from Aphrodite would not raise an eyebrow, but put in her mouth by a sophisticated poet of the fifth century, they carry more than a suspicion of malice aforethought. Contrast this bludgeoning of the audience with the crudest form of "divine motivation," with the procedure followed by a sincere apologist, such as Aeschylus, for his god. The *Agamemnon* is a "Zeus-ridden" play, but the force of the god is deeply and religiously felt by the poet and is only allowed to appear in veiled lyrical comments of the chorus—and even the chorus are not fully aware of the application of their song to the bloody business on hand.

At the end of the play, the goddess Artemis appears and explains, *post factum*, to the victims Theseus and Hippolytus what the more fortunate audience has learned from Aphrodite at the beginning. Theologically, her speeches form the complement to the sorry picture of the gods which Aphrodite's words have already suggested.

Structurally, too, the placing of this divine frame around the action of the play is significant. In the prologue and the epilogue, Euripides disposes of his goddesses and of the literal statements of the myth, without its meanings. In between, the human characters take over; Artemis and Aphrodite are still there, not as gods, but as components of a human situation. The tragedy, stemming chiefly from the character of Hippolytus, becomes a human one.

Here and there throughout the play, in the asides of minor characters, in the reflections of the chorus, Euripides gives hints as to what we should think of the Aphrodite-of-the-prologue. In the opening

scene, Hippolytus' servant begs Aphrodite's forgiveness of his master's youthful pride, reminding her that gods should be wiser than men (ll. 117–20). The nurse, in her first horrified outbursts at Phaedra's guilty passion, declares, "Cypris [Aphrodite] all this time was not a god at all, but something greater than a god, if that were possible . . ." (ll. 359–60). The chorus, in the midst of the *human* action of the play, sustains, as a *leit-motif*, the sinister power of the Aphrodite-of-the-prologue. Such retention of the mythical, the supernatural, view of this dark force is, of course, most proper in the lyric portions of the play. But even the chorus, timid and pious as it is, finishes by declaring their wrath with the gods (l. 1146), when Aphrodite's revenge is accomplished in the curse of Theseus against his son. Finally, as the play nears its close, this cry is taken up by the major sufferers; Theseus (l. 1461) and the dying Hippolytus (l. 1415) both cry out their hatred of Aphrodite.

Yet "Gods should be wiser than men," the servant has said—and Euripides agrees with him. The same thought recurs after the revenge of Dionysus in the *Bacchae*; "Gods should not be like men in their passions," says Cadmus (l. 1348). Elsewhere in Euripides (in the *Iphigenia in Tauris*, for example) the evil attributes of the gods are explicitly shown to be projections of the human psyche, excusing its own evil. For Euripides as for Plato, the conception of God had no meaning divorced from the conception of good.

In the *Hippolytus*, the most fundamental technique whereby Euripides translates the myth into human terms is to be found in the characterization of Hippolytus and in certain fatal responses of his to situations given in the plot. On the literal level of meaning, Hippolytus is simply the innocent victim of Aphrodite; not to destroy this level of meaning, the dramatist must do his darkening of Hippolytus in a subtle manner. Euripides was a most conscious wizard of words and we will find the repetition and subtle manipulation of certain thematic terms, often carrying double meanings, an important device in this part of his dramatic exposition.

Hippolytus first appears leading a train of hunters dedicated to the worship of Artemis. His first long speech, addressed to Artemis, describes a grove, sacred to this goddess of the hunt and of chastity, which only the chosen few, such as himself, who are *sophrones* by nature, may inhabit. Now the Greek virtue, *sophrosyne*, has no precise English equivalent; in general, it means, "keeping within the measure" and observing a proper sense of proportion in all respects. Thus, on the one hand, it entails modesty, self-control, and the virtue of "not getting beyond oneself" in any way; on the other hand, it entails a balanced

view of life and an equability of temperament which will tolerate the different temperaments of others. The personal and specific self-control involved in chastity was only one aspect of *sophrosyne*; in his constant harping on his own pre-eminence in this virtue, Hippolytus makes the fatal error of mistaking the part for the whole—and, worse, of so exaggerating the importance of the part that, in him, the whole virtue is destroyed and recoils upon himself.

True to his manner, Euripides first hints at the weakness in Hippolytus' virtue in the gentle warning of his servant (ll. 88 ff.). The latter suggests, delicately, that his master is *semnos* in his rude disregard for Aphrodite. Now the word *semnos* has also a double meaning: "revered," "august," "holy," in the good sense; "haughty," "pompous," "unapproachable," in the bad sense. He who is *semnos* in the latter sense cannot, of course, be *sophron*. Hippolytus' threatening reply to the servant ("Watch out your tongue doesn't ruin you!") and his haughty disdain for Aphrodite, in this passage, are the first indications that he is *semnos* and the statement (l. 104), "Some men cherish some gods, others, others," suggests the antithesis of that balanced view of life which true *sophrosyne* entails.

In the two crucial scenes of the tragedy, Euripides employs these terms effectively in his dramatic expression of the fatal qualities in the hero's virtue. In the first, where the guilty passion of Phaedra breaks on the intolerant chastity of Hippolytus, the latter shows his *semnotes* most openly. The poet has taken some pains to present Phaedra as an innocent victim who intended to die with her secret. Hence, Hippolytus' scathing attack on her and, through her, all womankind, shows, at its worst, that haughty, one-sided virtue of his which will never listen and sympathize where it cannot condone. The hero concludes his indictment with this expression of his contempt for all women: "Let someone teach them to be modest [*sophronein*] or let me crush them all forever" (l. 668). It is left for Phaedra to express the self-damning qualities implicit in Hippolytus' speech, for it has corrupted even her own noble resolve to die:

> . . . but in dying I will become a bane, at least, to that other one as well, that he may learn not to be so lofty about my woes. In sharing this woe with me he will learn the quality of true moderation [*sophronein*]. (ll. 725–31)

So, whatever we may think of the Aphrodite-of-the-prologue, we see that in the play it is Hippolytus' own words which move Phaedra to write the fatal letter.

In the second crucial scene, that in which Theseus curses his son, the qualities which we have already noted in Hippolytus are made to ap-

pear in a somewhat different way. Listening to Theseus' ill-advised tirade, we cannot help feeling that some of the contumely he pours upon his son represents a sort of back-log of annoyance with the irritating, but till now quite unassailable, virtue which Hippolytus has long manifested. Wrong as he is, in some ways the old man may be said to know his boy.

> So you are the one who claims to live on terms of comradeship with the very gods! You are the one who's *sophron* and quite untouched by evil! I'm not likely to believe those boasts. . . . Go, then, and play the imposter with your meatless food, your bread diet. Take Orpheus for your leader, and give honour to the "hot air" [*kapnous*!] of wordy holy books! But now you've been found out. . . . Let all beware of such as these. They hunt their prey with lofty [*semnois*] speeches, devising base things the while. (ll. 952 ff.)

Theseus' specific suspicions of his son's smug and haughty religiosity are, of course, quite unjustified. But that there is a canker in the "holy dedication" of Hippolytus, the whole tragedy reveals.

Hippolytus' reply is an outraged protest of his innocence, on the basis of past performance or, rather, non-performance. "There is no man *sophronesteros* than I" (ll. 994–5): Hippolytus means "more chaste," of course, but the boastful statement gives the lie to any claim to *sophrosyne* in the full sense. To all his son's pleas, father Theseus replies wearily, "Alas, that self-righteous air of yours [*to semnon*] is killing me. Leave your native land at once!" (ll. 1064–5)

To the bitter end, Euripides will not let Hippolytus or the audience forget those imagined virtues of *semnotes* and *sophrosyne*. When the curse of Theseus has been fulfilled and Hippolytus is dragged dying on the stage, he cries:

> Zeus, Zeus, do you see this? 'Tis I, this *semnos* man [holy man/haughty man] . . . this man who surpasses everyone in *sophrosyne* who now, his life destroyed, goes to Hades, 'neath the earth. (1363 ff.)

In its simplest terms, the plot of the *Bacchae* tells a tale of divine revenge, like that of the *Hippolytus*. Dionysus, angered that his godhood is not recognized by King Pentheus of Thebes, leads a band of Phrygian women votaries (the chorus in the drama) to that city where he himself appears disguised as his own priest. He maddens Agave, the King's mother, and the women of Thebes so that they all follow him to the hills as Bacchic revellers, drunk with the god. Pentheus suspects the Bacchic rites as simply an excuse for the women to behave in an unseemly fashion in the woods. Despite several miracles that

should warn him he is dealing with a force beyond his powers, he continues the hopeless attempt to imprison Dionysus and suppress his cult. Finally, by a trick, Dionysus leads Pentheus into the woods, where he is torn to pieces by the maddened Theban women, lead by Agave, who mistakes her son for the sacrificial animal. After a long and painful scene in which Agave is slowly brought back to her senses, Dionysus appears in all his glory and explains that the tragic end of Pentheus has occurred because he, a man, did despite to a god.

To the traditional material which forms the stuff of the *Bacchae*, Euripides introduces certain dramatic tensions which give a new meaning to Dionysianism and to the dangers inherent in suppressing it. Perhaps for the first time, Dionysianism is seen as a "phenomenon": the projection of the non-rational, impractical element in man itself releases a new force which cannot operate creatively in the sensible workaday world. The *Bacchae* preserves both the original roots of the Pentheus myth: the persecution-and-revenge theme (reflecting historical persecution of the "new" religion) and the ritual-sacrifice theme. In terms of the dramatic action, the motivation of the death of Pentheus appears in the characterization of a vengeful Dionysus, irked by an unbeliever, and the traditional ritual sacrifice of the Bacchantes supplies the means. But in terms of dramatic analysis, the real reasons for the catastrophe appear in the characterization, on the one hand, of Pentheus, stubborn and incomplete of soul, and, on the other, of Dionysianism, as an irresistible human force, potential of great good or great evil.

The simple revenge theme need not detain us long; in fact, Euripides lets Dionysus state this "given material" in the prologue, where the dramatist frequently gets rid of the literal level of meaning. It is the latent theme just suggested which provides the tensions and the new meanings necessary for Euripidean drama. In fact, as in most good drama, the tensions *are* the meanings. We may, perhaps, express them as follows: the tension between the beneficent and the daemonic, or destructive, aspects of Dionysianism; the tension between the natural, instinctive wisdom of the Bacchantes and the rationalistic, sophistic wisdom of Pentheus; finally, the tension within the psyche of Pentheus himself, for it is his prurience, the obverse of his puritanism, which proves to be the immediate cause of his undoing.

The dramatic movement of the play expresses the gradual shift from the good to the bad potentialities of Dionysianism, as it meets the suppression of Pentheus. Dramatically, the crucial conflict is presented in a series of tense scenes between the disguised god and his persecutor, which occupy the middle portions of the play. But it is through the

chorus and the minor characters that the significance of this conflict is grasped. The chorus is particularly well suited to the expression of the group emotionalism of the cult, and it is chiefly through this instrument that Euripides expresses the declension from a state of "holy equilibrium" to one of violent outrage which the persecution of Pentheus brings about. In the opening passages of the play, before this persecution has begun to take effect, the chorus and Teiresias express, the one in lyrical, the other in philosophic, terms, the beneficient aspects of Dionysianism.

The presentation of Teiresias, illustrious prophet and symbol of "the wisdom of the ages," dressed in the costume of a Bacchante, is a bold and effective device. Through Teiresias, Euripides introduces the second of the tensions we have mentioned: Dionysianism (appearances and Pentheus to the contrary) is shown to be allied with wisdom. To a conventional and superficial Pentheus, Euripides opposes a philosophic Teiresias. Thus the Prophet tells the King:

> Mortal wisdom is as nothing in matters truly divine. The simple wisdom of the ages, no argument shall overthrow, even if intellectual wisdom has been "discovered" by subtle minds. (ll. 200–3)

Here begins a verbal play (reminiscent of the technique we have observed in the *Hippolytus*) on the terms for "cleverness" and "wisdom," "opinion" and "understanding"; it is developed in the argument between Teiresias and Pentheus and in the ensuing choral ode. Teiresias enumerates the kindly, useful gifts of the god who "completes" Demeter's dry sustenance for men: release from pain, sleep and forgetfulness of the daily ills, and, to mention but one of the more "enthusiastic," maniac effects of Dionysus, the gift of prophecy. The speech concludes with a final disparagement of Pentheus' misguided rationalism and an invitation to join the happy throng. Pentheus replies by sending guards to capture the stranger priest.

The choral ode which follows develops the quarrel between sophisticated wisdom and the homelier, earthier truth;[3] in fact, it is often in these lyric passages, freer in construction, more elusive and elliptical in expression, that Euripides is able to employ that verbal virtuosity which is one of his most brilliant techniques for suggesting the subtler

[3]E.g.: "Unbridled tongues and foolishness that knows no law has disaster for its end; but the life of tranquillity and true understanding remains unshaken . . ." (ll. 387 ff.).

". . . cleverness is not wisdom; nor is it wisdom to be 'intellectual' about things which are not of men" (ll. 395–6).

"[The god] hates those . . . who do not, day and night, keep the Bacchic way of life, who do not keep a wise heart and mind away from too clever men. What the commoner sort of people name as right, and use, this I would accept" (ll. 424 ff.).

shades of meaning. It is the choral passages, too, which can best express the joyous lyrical abandon which is one of the most positive values of Dionysianism. Finally, as Pentheus is tried and found wanting in the thrilling cat-and-mouse scenes between the King and the "captured" god, it is the chorus which reflects the sinister change in the Dionysiac mood, turning violent under persecution. Once or twice, the old question about wisdom reappears hesitantly (e.g., ll. 877, 897), but it is soon swept away in a tide of vengeful lyrics.

The third tension we have mentioned, that within the psyche of the King, is expressed dramatically. When Pentheus persists in his persecution, Dionysus maddens him; he "turns the stone over"; the underside of Pentheus' puritanism appears as a passionate and prurient curiosity to see these orgiastic female rites which he imagines.

After Pentheus has been torn apart in the woods and Agave has been brought to dreadful awareness of her deed, one question still remains: "Should the gods be like men in their passions?" (l. 1348) For Euripides, the question implies that Dionysus, like Aphrodite, is not a god at all; hence it is idle to ask whether he approves of either of them. Both are forces which must be reckoned with, forces potential of great good and great evil, which will destroy the man who fails to recognize them.

In each of the two dramas which we have considered, Euripides takes myth seriously; translating it into his own terms, he uses it to express certain fundamental truths about the human condition.

In several other dramas, he sets out to discredit certain myths, inasmuch as they were responsible for preserving an erroneous and unworthy conception of the gods. The *Iphigenia in Tauris* and the *Helen* will serve as useful examples of this mode of treatment of myth: both belong to the melodramatic group of Euripides' plays; both make use of little-known and somewhat fantastic versions of famous myths; but whereas in the *Helen* Euripides contents himself with a tragi-comic spoofing of the divine machinery of myth, the mockery of the *Iphigenia in Tauris* is grimmer and the nobility of a human heroine is used to show up the ignobility of barbarous conceptions of the gods.

According to the myth[4] which Euripides follows in the latter play, Iphigenia, saved from sacrifice at her father's hands at Aulis, was made Artemis' priestess at barbarous Tauris, where Greeks were sacrificed to the goddess. Local Attic legend connected this Tauric rite with a domestic one in which a drop of human blood was shed to Artemis.

[4]Cf. Scholiast to Aristophanes, *Lysistrata*, l. 645; *Etymologicum Magnum*, 747, 756; Herodotus, IV, 103; Hyginus, *Fab.*, 120; Strabo, 308. Cf. also L. Farnell, *Cults of the Greek States* (Oxford, 1896), 440–2, for discussion of Artemis myths and rituals.

In Euripides' version, Orestes, brother of Iphigenia and guilty of his mother's blood, is observed by Apollo to save Artemis' statue from the Taurians and bring it to the Athenians. Captured by the Taurians, Orestes and his friend Pylades are brought to Iphigenia, who is to prepare them for human sacrifice. Eventually (after a lengthy recognition scene) she saves them, and the Greeks, complete with Artemis' statue, effect a melodramatic escape to Athens.

The chief dramatic tension of the play lies in the paradoxical situation of Iphigenia and in the conflict in her between the impulses of vengeance and of love. Iphigenia has been cruelly wronged by the Greeks and has more reason than has Artemis to welcome their slaughter at the goddess' altar. Euripides, further embittering his heroine by a depressing dream, plays up this motivation with considerable dramatic suspense. It is the resolution of Iphigenia's conflict in favour of her nobler emotions which shows up as barbarous a conception of the goddess Artemis, so much more vicious than the human heroine. Speaking in the tone of a civilized and somewhat Euripidean Greek, Iphigenia pronounces: "I think that these Taurians, being man-slaying men, simply project their crime upon the goddess. For, in my opinion, no one of the divinities is evil." (ll. 389–91) Again, it is Iphigenia who reminds her fellow-countrymen that the Hellenic must always be the civilizing influence, on ritual as on myth: "Do thou," she prays to Artemis, "thy spirit well disposed, leave this barbarous land [of the Taurians]! To dwell here fits thee not, when thou canst hold a happy, kindly state." (ll. 1086–8)

Orestes' part in the transportation of Artemis' statue has, of course, no real justification in ritual or in myth, but Euripides shows a certain intellectual neatness in thus tying the tail of the myth to its beginning. Iphigenia was the first, Orestes the last, sufferer in a series of woes stemming from the false idea that Artemis wanted human sacrifice. Now Orestes is to be absolved of his blood-guilt by transferring the cult of Artemis to Athens, there to be purged of its barbarities.

The *Helen* of Euripides, like the *Iphigenia in Tauris*, follows a variant version of a famous myth, and it, too, deals with the melodramatic rescue of a Greek heroine from a barbarous land. The Helen Story, as Euripides tells it, runs as follows: Helen never went to Troy with Paris. Instead, the jealous Hera substitutes a phantom for the real Helen, and Paris, unsuspecting, bears the phantom to Troy. ("And Paris," Helen tells us, l. 35, "thought that I was his, although I never was.") Zeus leaves the Greeks in ignorance also, so that they might fight the Trojan War; he wants to bring honour to a few Greeks, and, for the rest, to reduce the excess population (a nice Euripidean touch). Meanwhile, Zeus sends Helen, cloud-wrapped, courtesy of

Hermes, to the safe custody of the good King Proteus of Egypt. So much Helen tells us in the prologue; when the play begins, seven years after the fall of Troy, the good King Proteus has died and the virtuous Helen is seeking to avoid the suit of his violent son, Theoclymenus. Menelaus is thought to be dead but, "just in case," Theoclymenus vows death to any Greek approaching his shores. This, of course, supplies just the atmosphere of danger required for the exciting arrival of the husband, shipwrecked with the phantom Helen, upon the Egyptian shore. The reciprocal recognition of husband and wife (inhibited by Menelaus' conviction that the phantom he has been clasping is real) and the ruse by which the hero's identity is kept hidden from the present royal suitor supply the complication of a plot which is further complicated by the presence of an omniscient prophetess, Theonoe, sister of King Theoclymenus. On her connivance depends the success of any scheme by which the Greek pair may outwit the King and secure their escape. Theonoe reveals that there is strife in heaven on the issue: Hera is for their escape, Aphrodite against it—both, of course, for purely selfish motives. Zeus is even now debating the issue—but it turns out that the decision really depends on Theonoe, who resolves to keep their secret from her brother. The latter is then gulled by a comic-opera trick and the pair make their escape. Theonoe is saved from the fatal effects of her brother's wrath by the last-minute intervention of those doughty *dei ex machina*, the Dioscuri, Helen's deified brothers, who arrive prating breathlessly (they are a little late) of the will of Zeus.

How much of this fantastic plot Euripides himself invented we cannot be sure. The two pre-Euripidean sources of the Egyptian version of the Helen myth known to us are Stesichorus and Herodotus. According to Herodotus' account of the tale told to him by Egyptian priests,[5] there is no phantom and no divine motivation of Helen's sojourn at the court of Proteus. Herodotus observes, too, that the Egyptian version was known to Homer,[6] but suppressed by him because it did not suit his epic. We know that Stesichorus was said to have been blinded for writing disparagingly of Helen and to have regained his sight by a propitiatory palinode favourable to Helen's honour.[7] Of this palinode, the only three lines extant merely deny the truth of the former poem and state that Helen never went to Troy; in addition, we learn from Plato[8] that according to Stesichorus the phantom Helen was fought over by the warriors at Troy in ignorance of the true Helen. Other

[5]Herodotus, II, 112–20.
[6]Cf. Homer, *Odyssey*, IV, 227–30, 351–2.
[7]Cf. J. M. Edmonds, *Lyra Graeca* (London, 1924), II, p. 38, no. 12; p. 44, no. 18; T. Bergk, *Poetae Lyrici Graeci* (Leipzig, 1882), III, frgs. 26, 32.
[8]*Republic*, 856 b.

later versions, principally that of Apollodorus, contain some non-Euripidean features which were presumably derived from Stesichorus.[9]

Whatever may have been the content of Stesichorus' palinode, it is obvious that Euripides gave full play to the fantastic elements to be found in it. Here, far from rationalizing myth and reducing it to human terms as he does in some plays, we find him giving it "the full treatment." What were his purposes in this treatment of myth? Surely to suggest that the more you are willing to accept as true the intervention of anthropomorphic gods in human affairs, the more fantastic stories you will get and the more absurd plights you will find the famous heroes in.

To this end, Euripides employs two interwoven devices. First, he plays up and perhaps improves upon the more fantastic elements of the myth, and here it is the jealous wranglings of the gods and their bungling attempts to set things straight which account for the weird plights of their innocent human pawns. Secondly, even in the midst of his parody, he lets an actor, or the chorus, stand aside from the god-vexed situation to make incredulous comments on it. The second of these devices had, of course, to be delicately handled by undertone and innuendo, since only so much patent ridicule of the gods was possible.

Helen's own complaints about her lot suggest something of Euripides' use of these techniques. In the prologue she tells the story of her peculiar birth with an incredulous aside (l. 21); she refers to it again in the same tone as she bewails her fresh troubles in the opening episode: "I've had a sorry fate from the very beginning. Who ever heard of women being born from an egg, as they say Leda bore me to Zeus?" (l. 255 ff.) Then comes the curious twofold explanation of all her troubles: "Monstrous, too, has been my whole life and all my troubles, partly because of the goddess Hera . . . but partly because of my own beauty" (ll. 260–1). One feels that for Euripides the human cause, a woman's beauty, is the more likely root of all evil. The dramatist emphasizes it in a bit of tragi-comic byplay at the end of this speech. Helen is close to suicide at this point but, even as she curses her beauty as the cause of her woe, she decides against hanging herself, because it will make her look too ugly!

The next "work of the gods" which comes in for a mercilessly comic drubbing by Euripides is the business of the wraith. Menelaus is shipwrecked on the shores of Egypt and stows the phantom Helen in a cave while he goes to reconnoitre. True to the comic-opera tradition,

[9]Cf. Apollodorus, *Mythologia Graeca*, ed. Teubner, I, 188; Bergk, *Poetae*, frg. 26 and references there given.

he meets Helen almost immediately, despite the fact that the Egyptian shores are supposed to be teeming with guards ready to apprehend any Greek who wanders thither. The ensuing dialogue (shorn of its richer verbiage) runs something like this:[10]

Menelaus [after several exchanges in excellent Greek]: Are you a Greek?
Helen: Yes, I'm a Greek.
Menelaus: You look extraordinarily like my wife, Helen.
Helen: I, for my part, would have taken you for my husband, Menelaus.
Menelaus [in the grand style]: Rightly have you recognized that most unhappy man.
Helen [ecstatically]: To my arms at last, my long-lost husband!
Menelaus [very pukka]: Unhand me, wench! . . . *My* wife's back there in the cave.

An embarrassing dialogue follows in which poor Menelaus feels that he is losing his senses and Helen that she is losing her grip. Apparently he has found this so-called phantom satisfactory enough; who, he asks, makes phantoms of flesh and blood? To Helen's reply, "the air . . . and the handiwork of the gods," he replies "Nonsense!"—and we are inclined to think that Euripides and the audience agree with him. His final reason for believing in the phantom taken from Troy and disbelieving the real Helen is Euripides' best touch: "All the trouble I had in winning *her* at Troy convinces me; you do not!" (l. 593) However, the situation is saved by the arrival of one of Menelaus' shipwrecked sailors who announces that the Helen-of-the-cave has just been wafted up to heaven, confessing all as she ascends. The messenger's reaction to this deception of the gods, which makes the whole Trojan War pointless, gives opportunity for another Euripidean shaft against traditional religion. "Why," he asks (l. 749 ff.), "did not our prophets tell us the truth, when they saw us fighting and dying for a phantom? . . . Perhaps you will say that it wasn't heaven's will that they should. Then why employ prophets at all? Better to sacrifice straight to the gods, ask a blessing and forget about the high-priests . . ."—a dangerously low-church sort of comment.

Throughout the play, Euripides preserves most successfully the mock-heroic tone. The pathos of the war that was fought for a wraith, the confused heroism of the never daunted Menelaus, even the tears of the innocent Helen are never allowed to touch us deeply. Into the laments of Helen, Euripides usually manages to slip some comic or bathetic touch so that we are never likely to take her plight more seri-

[10]See ll. 561 ff. For practical purposes, the passage has been shortened a little and some slight liberties taken to suggest the mock-heroic tone in English.

ously than we would the throes of a comic-opera heroine.[11] Yet the question asked more seriously in the *Iphigenia in Tauris*—"Do the gods really act with such wanton cruelty?"—is at least implied in a choral ode toward the end of the play:

> What man can say that he has really tracked down what god is or what he is not, or what lies in between . . . [what man *can* say this] when he has seen in what contradictory and unexpected happenings the affairs of the gods themselves become involved? You, Helen, are the daughter of Zeus himself . . . yet, by scandalous repute all over Greece, you are a traitor, unjust, untrusted and ungodly. No, I simply cannot tell you what "the certain" is, whatever may pass for it among men. (ll. 1137–49)

"The glory of great heroes" was one of Zeus's motives for allowing the Trojan War. The present ode comments more sombrely on the vanity of war heroics in this or any other war:

> Witless are they who grasp after honours, crassly ending men's strivings with the might of arms. Strife will never leave the towns of men, if bloody battle always decides it. For you, Helen, the daughters of Troy find their marriage bowers bereft, when the strife about you *might have been* resolved by words. But, as it is, Troy's sons have fallen and the fire of Zeus has leapt upon her walls. . . . (ll. 1151–62)

Euripides' final jest in the *Helen*, at the expense of the myth and its gods, lies in his resolution of the ridiculous situation. The gods had promised Helen, when she was first "stored" in Egypt, that they would eventually restore her, honour and person intact, to Greece. But at the crucial moment when her fate must be decided, Hera and Aphrodite are still wrangling, Zeus is still pondering, and the actual decision Euripides gives to a human being, the prophetess Theonoe, on whose complicity the escape depends. Not until the pair has got clean away do the gods come puffing up—too late to save anyone, except Theonoe! Thus Euripides' parting shot in this merry melodrama is to show the gods as bungling and ineffective even in their efforts to clear up the mess they have created.

The dramas which we have discussed all involve Euripides' own attitudes to traditional ideas of the gods, but it is not to be thought that his uses of myth were limited to the expression of such attitudes.

[11] One or two examples have already been given. Another occurs at the end of Helen's prayer to Aphrodite, begging at least to be allowed to die at home (ll. 1102 ff.): "Why [Aphrodite] are you so insatiate of evil, employing all the guileful tricks of deceitful love? . . . If only you were more *moderate*—for in all other respects you are the most delightful of gods to men. *I speak as one who knows*" (lit. "I speak not idly"). This last remark sounds like a Euripidean leer, fitting the Helen of popular gossip better than the chaste Helen of the present play.

Euripides was something of a virtuoso in this part of the Greek dramatist's art; even from the present limited discussion, perhaps some idea can be gleaned of his versatility in handling traditional material. When he takes myth seriously, he can translate it into a gripping human drama; when he laughs at it, he can let it run away with the drama, even giving it a push to help it along. But in either case, whether by serious tragic action or by pantomime and subtle asides, he makes it say something of his own.

ACTON: A PORTRAIT

JOHN C. CAIRNS

"SIR JOHN is more like Macaulay than anyone else I can remember in the matter of memory," wrote the Duke of Argyll after meeting the future Lord Acton one evening in 1863. "His knowledge is marvellously varied, wide and accurate. He, like Macaulay, can never forget anything he has read. The consequence is that he is a walking encyclopedia. As he is now only about twenty-eight, it is awful to think what his knowledge will be when he is sixty, if health and mind last."[1] Argyll's impression was not unique; it was shared by almost everyone who ever met Acton. That was what they thought of him, "a walking encyclopedia." It was something less than flattering to be labelled simply as this, the most learned man in England. But it was inevitable. Acton moved through the Victorian age known only remotely to many, understood virtually by none, like some wise man from a land far off, utterly alone, respected if unhonoured, and to the end of his life inscrutable. Perhaps the fault lay not so much with the Victorians as with the great Catholic historian himself, unable to accept simply what others never questioned, set apart by birth, education, ideals, searching always for the achievement and station this world would not give him. Posterity's chance of learning much more about him seems slight. He erected a barrier before the living; he scattered false clues all his life. The impression remaining of him, then, is shadowy and inexact, but commanding enough to reveal something of the tremendous reaches of the mind that lay beyond the impenetrable exterior with which he confronted his generation. For Acton's was a great mind. But it was also a mind crushed by a sense of rejection and failure in spheres where his best talents never lay, or where his independent spirit brought him up against unyielding authority. Indeed, failure was written across much of Acton's life and work. Somehow he was destined to be denied realization and fulfilment in almost everything he attempted and hoped for.

For John Emerich Edward Dalberg Acton, born in 1834 the heir to a strange family of expatriate Englishmen who had taken service with the Neapolitan court, there were few points of genuine personal contact before the middle of the century. His rather indolent father, Sir Richard Acton, who died at the age of thirty-five, he could scarcely

[1]John G. Campbell, Duke of Argyll, *Passages from the Past* (London, 1907), I, 45. In general, each footnote in this article indicates sources for the paragraph preceding the footnote number.

have known. His grandfather, Sir John Francis Acton, adventurer, general, and Prime Minister of the Kingdom of the Two Sicilies, with his attraction for the imperious Queen Maria Carolina and his flair for self-remuneration, was an unsympathetic memory. Lord Granville, although a kind and pleasant stepfather, was never at home in the world of growing curiosity which was Johnny Acton's. Cardinal Wiseman, whose school at Oscott in England young Sir John attended from the age of nine, was impressive but never familiar; soon he was to become implacably bitter and hostile toward his former pupil. At sixteen, then, with a regretful glance at Oxford and Cambridge (still struggling through the modern world under the illusion that Catholics were somewhat unsuitable as undergraduates), Acton came into the hands of the celebrated Dr. Ignaz von Döllinger in Munich. There in Bavaria he laboured under the guidance of the distinguished Church historian at four languages and the study of history. For both of them, man and boy, the meeting was of capital importance. Döllinger's influence increased and maintained itself at least until the fateful year of 1870. Writing his "begging letter" (for books) home to England, Acton promised "dear Lord Granville" that he would continue to make history his chief study "independent of the classic writers." Thus Döllinger's ascendancy was rapidly established in the varied but rigidly organized programme of this sixteen-year-old boy. And in many ways the pupil mirrored the master.[2]

Long after, when the Munich years had slipped away into his memory, planning, as he planned so much all through his life, a biography of his friend and teacher, Acton recalled that Döllinger "had all the liberality that consists of common sense, justice, humanity, enlightenment, the wisdom of Canning or Guizot. But revolution, as a breach of continuity, as the renunciation of history, was odious to him. . . ." The conception passed between them but little altered. He said Döllinger regarded Christianity as a force more than a doctrine, displaying it as it expanded and became the soul of later history. It was, wrote Acton, the mission of Döllinger's life to discover how this was accomplished, and to understand European history by the aid of original and authentic sources which alone yielded certainty. There too, from Bavaria to England, the idea was transferred almost whole. Yet in all the years they lived together, until Acton was a man of twenty-two, it was inevitable that differences should appear. Thinking back on his youth, it seemed to him that Döllinger was too much absorbed in dis-

[2]Acton to Granville, 1848 (an incorrect date; it ought to be 1850) in J. N. Figgis and R. V. Laurence, *Selections from the Correspondence of the First Lord Acton* (London, 1917), 7–8; on the early life see David Mathew, *Acton: The Formative Years* (London, 1946).

tant events ever to become a close observer of what was happening about him. "He knew," continued the former pupil, "all that could be known about the ninth century; in the nineteenth his superiority deserted him. Though he informed himself assiduously his thoughts were not there." Of Döllinger this was likely true enough; but perhaps too there creeps in here the element of doubt about himself. At all events, although Döllinger aroused him, shaped him, even created him as an historian, Acton passed on beyond Döllinger to larger views, however far they fell short of the exigencies of the later Victorian age. For Döllinger was not what Acton would call "a Liberal." Writing to his friend William Ewart Gladstone, Acton remembered that he could hardly make some of his historical judgments intelligible to Döllinger, "and when he knew what I meant he certainly did not like it." Differences, then, there had been; and the future was to hold still greater ones. But for all that, Munich was critically important in his life.[3]

At twenty-four the education was scarcely complete, but the tutelage was ended. The fantastic and romantic background of the Acton family had receded into the distance for Sir John. The brilliant scholar emerged, serious and ambitious. Few doors were closed to him who had conversed intimately and easily with King Louis of Bavaria, travelled with Lord Ellesmere to Franklin Pierce's Washington, found Longfellow tiresome and James Russell Lowell delightfully witty. From his father he had inherited a number of properties and the substantial income of about £7500 a year; from Lord Granville, effortless entrée into the political and social realm of the English Whigs. As an organ for the political instruction of Catholics and a platform for the young and bursting scholar, the *Rambler*, which Newman had edited for a short time, looked highly promising. And with Richard Simpson, a man older than he, as co-editor, Acton struck out on the stormy voyage which was to take him to the Vatican Council of 1870 to strike thunderous blows for liberty on the doors of the Holy Father's palace, and ultimately to Trinity College, Cambridge, as Regius Professor of Modern History. Simpson remained in London; Acton travelled back and forth to the Continent, directing, reading, writing. The reviews came thick and fast; the essays were long, learned, and involved; the correspondence of the two men coruscating. Then, as later, Acton revealed an apparent total lack of doubt. "I am softened," he confided to his partner, "toward all Goldwin Smith's errors by his

[3]John E. Dalberg Acton, *The History of Freedom and Other Essays* (London, 1907), 383, 401–2; Acton to Gladstone, March 22, 1891, in *Correspondence*, 69–70.

purposefulness and honesty. He often speaks of things he does not know, but is not really a humbug in history." The eminent professor of history at Oxford might or might not have been flattered by so trenchant an appraisal. Prosecutions were thorough, and judgments inclined to be summary. "I got through Buckle last night," he wrote Simpson again, "Setting aside the theory, the learning of the book is utterly superficial and obsolete. He is altogether a mere humbug and a very bad arguer. He has taken great pains to say things that have been said much better before in books he has not read. He has no knowledge of the classics and still less of theological literature. We can expose him completely." And nine weeks later a letter was on its way to the co-editor complimenting him on his "most felicitous demolition" of an historian who, if he has never been judged a great historian, certainly conceived in a new and interesting manner the pattern of civilization.[4]

In all this, the tone was not bitter. But the mellowness of the Cambridge years was still far away. Now and then the bright and brilliant Acton appeared to lose his footing completely. Such an occasion was his withering assault upon the Protestant belief, "the great modern apostasy," faced with a day of reckoning when it would surrender all that it had gathered in its application to the things of this world, while those who had remained true to the Church would "have into the bargain those products of the Protestant civilization on which its claims to superiority are founded." For all his erudition and reserve and cosmopolitan experience, Acton was sometimes only a very young man of twenty-four. Yet it was not in the main along this line of religious intolerance that he erred. He was after all the pupil of Döllinger. And he moved among the Old Catholics unfeeling and unfelt. Orthodoxy could not hold his spirit captive. The concept of liberty as the central thread of human experience was already taking shape. Admitting that persecution might be necessary for the preservation of existing society, he nevertheless wrote of Louis XIV's denial of religious toleration in the Revocation of the Edict of Nantes at the close of the seventeenth century as "the greatest wrong ever inflicted on the Protestant subjects of a Catholic State." This essential independence of thought was ineradicable in Acton, and in the end it was this vein of thought which made the *Rambler*'s continuance impossible in the view of the Church's hierarchy. Acton bowed to his superiors; the *Rambler* came to an end.

[4]Acton to Simpson, March 30, June 6, 1858, Dec. 15, 17, 1861, in the badly edited Abbot Gasquet, *Lord Acton and His Circle* (New York, 1906), 13, 21, 244, 245.

He transferred his editorial attention to the quarterly *Home and Foreign Review*. But nothing had been altered save the name. The struggle was scarcely begun.[5]

Although brashness and haste dwindled, conviction hardened, and it was evident that another crisis was gathering. The *Review* lasted but two years. Even Newman moved away from Acton. Manning was positively enraged by this rebellious failure to comply with orthodoxy. "He knew what I thought," wrote the Cardinal in his autobiographical notes, "of the *Rambler*, the *Home and Foreign Review*, the *Academy*, I think it called itself. He knew what I had written on the Temporal Power, on the Infallibility of the Roman Pontiff." Acton did indeed. But before he bowed again and for the last time, he would have his say. Unable to glory with the French Catholics Joseph de Maistre or Robert de Lammenais in the authority of the papacy, he held that "the Church is interested, not in the triumph of a principle or a cause which may be dated as that of 1789, or of 1815, or of 1830, but in the triumph of justice and the just cause, whether it be that of the people or of the Crown, of a Catholic party or of its opponents. She admits the tests of public law and political science." Catholicism could not negate the truth, and a reading of history showed "the undeniable existence of sin, error or fraud in the high places of the Church." God's handwriting, continued Acton, existed in history quite independent of the Church. No ecclesiastical exigence could alter a fact. What had been, had been. It was the historian's duty to copy it down "without bias and without ulterior views." Then turning directly on his critics, he flung one last reproachful retort, acute, bitter perhaps, but undeniable. "The Catholic," he wrote, "may be sure that as the Church has lived in spite of the fact, she will survive its publication." Clearly Rome could not allow this voice to continue. It was totally unlikely that Pius IX would accept the statement that "the slow, silent, indirect action of public opinion bears the Holy See along, without any demoralizing conflict or dishonourable capitulation." For Acton, then, there was no alternative but to cease publication. Liberty of thought he would not surrender. Obedience to ecclesiastical authority he readily recognized. The *Review*, he wrote on bringing it to an end, "was but a partial and temporary embodiment of an imperishable idea—the faint reflection of a light which still lives and burns in the hearts of the silent thinkers of the Church." The journalistic effort had finally failed.[6]

[5]*History of Freedom*, 209, 260.
[6]Edmund S. Purcell, *Life of Cardinal Manning, Archbishop of Westminster* (London, 1895), II, 490–1; *History of Freedom*, 466–91.

Acton himself was not really prepared to keep silence. If he moved in more devious ways, however, the fight was against him. For years the papacy had been moving toward its goal, and what this was to be was finally made known to all. The stages by which Pius IX had advanced to the doctrine of Infallibility were sure and irrevocable. When eventually the Vatican Council was summoned in 1869, Acton engaged in the struggle without reserve. While the bishops deliberated in the first general council to meet since that of Trent in the sixteenth century, the Englishman did all he could to stem the tide in Rome. Cardinal Manning recalled later that Acton had been "the *mediastinus* between the French and German bishops, always busy with tongue and pen." Certainly he was influential. He provided the opposition clergy with historical arguments, and more than anyone else he was responsible for exciting feeling in Germany and England, through his writings, against the Council. Yet the position in Rome was no more tenable than it had been years before in London with the *Rambler* and the *Review*. The opposition movement failed completely to disrupt the purpose of the Papacy. "They deemed," Acton wrote afterwards of the dissenting minority which withdrew from the Council, "that they had assigned the course which was to save the Church, by teaching the Catholics to reject a Council which was neither legitimate in constitution, free in action, nor unanimous in doctrine, but to observe moderation in contesting an authority over which great catastrophes impend. They conceived that it would thus be possible to save the peace and unity of the Church without sacrifice of faith and reason." The future, he thought, was not without hope. Time would heal the breach, the decrees would fade and be dissolved by "a power mightier than the Episcopate and a process less perilous than schism." For all that, the personal failure of Acton was total and could only have been bitter.[7]

Unquestionably his mind was in evolution. The more youthful combative spirit of the *Rambler* period was at an end; the shift toward the more serious study of the history of liberty was now apparent. But the veil over his life and thoughts is drawn more tightly than before. Why he escaped excommunication, the fate of Döllinger who had likewise striven against the Vatican Council, will not likely ever be known. He had said earlier that "a Catholic who defends himself at the expense of an ecclesiastical superior sacrifices that which is generally of more public value than his own fair name. . . ." Nevertheless he had gone to Rome; for six months in 1870 he had fought the Papacy behind the scenes. Having lost the battle, he now acquiesced in the outcome. Yet he remained inwardly as before. When his bishop grew angry with

[7]Purcell, *Manning*, II, 434, 490–91; *History of Freedom*, 549–50.

him after the Council he accepted the decrees because, as he wrote to Richard Simpson, "They are a law to me as much as those of Trent, not from any private interpretation, but from the authority from which they came." But it was not so simple a matter as that. He had fought the decrees precisely because he believed they sanctified the crimes of the past. Yet the difficulties of reconciling them with tradition did not, he said, disturb him, "a layman whose business it is not to explain theological questions, and who leaves that to his betters." In saying all this, Acton was never more enigmatic. It would not perhaps be possible to enquire further into his mental state. He evidently refused to confide in Simpson. We can take him at his word or not, as we like. To his friend Gladstone he wrote of the eventual triumph of "the better elements lying almost concealed and inoperative in the Church," and he added that as he was then (it was 1874) attacking ultramontanism in root and branch, "there is very little chance of my escaping excommunication." But escape it he did, where Döllinger did not. Partly it may have been that his fight was not quite so active. But for whatever reasons, Rome chose, if not to overlook it, at least not to punish him. And we can no more than guess at his real views in all this. Possibly Newman, now far to the right, had put it best. Perhaps Acton would have echoed the words Newman wrote in 1863 during a period of discouragement over the policies of Pius IX: ". . . it is the very sense and certainty I have of the Church being divine which at once makes it easy to bear. All this will be over-ruled. And we do not make things better by disobedience. We may be able indeed to complicate matters, and to delay the necessary reforms; but our part is obedience. If we are but patient, all will come right." Some consolation for Acton there might be in this longer view, backed by knowledge of the trials and vicissitudes of centuries gone by; but no satisfaction, no sense of success.[8]

The ultramontanists in the Church were triumphant. Twelve years of work and struggle receded in failure. Acton turned once again to the world of Westminster. But already he had found Parliament unsatisfactory. Long ago, after he had visited America and shared the hostile reception accorded to Lord Granville's embassy to Moscow on the occasion of the coronation of the Emperor Alexander II in 1855, he had been elected to a safe seat in the House of Commons as member from Carlow, Ireland. Failing of re-election from this constituency in 1865, he had been returned from the family seat of Aldenham in Shropshire. But a recount the following year showed election irregu-

[8] *History of Freedom*, 442; Acton to Simpson, Dec. 10, 1874, in *Lord Acton*, 364; Acton to Gladstone, Dec. 16, 1874, in *Correspondence*, 49; Newman to Monsell, Jan. 13, 1863, *Correspondence*, 38.

larities. Once more he had stood for Bridgnorth, a few miles down the old turnpike from Aldenham Hall, and again he had failed to be elected. Even the years when he had sat in the House were not in any way distinguished; he had made a single speech. The ever optimistic, indulgent, and benign Granville thought it had done him much good, but the Irish and English electorates were rather less enthusiastic. Granville, indeed, probably knew little about his stepson; but he recognized his essential ambitiousness. "The *Times*," he had written Canning in 1857, "and a large portion of the party wish Johnny to be made a peer. It would be a good thing for everybody but himself, and he is too sagacious to accept being more or less shelved." Only twelve years later Acton was prepared to acquiesce; the peerage was conferred the year before the Vatican Council. But he was still not ready for the shelf.[9]

Gladstone was in the ascendant, and to his star Sir John had long since hitched his waggon. Now as Lord Acton he was looking to something better than Parliament. It seems certain that he counted on the Liberal leader to provide it. Between the two men there was the closest bond. Mary Gladstone remembered them as identical in fundamentals, and sympathetic in the essentials of their faiths. "Gladstone," remarked Matthew Arnold, "influences all around him but Acton. It is Acton who influences Gladstone." If we can believe the Prime Minister's daughter, Acton tended to see in Gladstone the fulfilment of his idea that politics was an affair of morality. Others have remarked the same thing, and that it was less the successes of Gladstone than his failures which attracted the historian to him; for noble failures in politics were rare enough in nineteenth-century England, or, for that matter, at any time. Whatever the bond, Acton evidently put his trust in the Liberal party. He was to wait twenty-five years. No great appointment ever came. John Morley said after Acton's death that he had been gravely disappointed because Gladstone had not offered him a Secretaryship of State in 1892, or had not earlier sent him as Ambassador to Berlin. George Russell was sure Acton had determined upon becoming Foreign Secretary. It was something more than ironic, then, that he should have accepted the position at Windsor in 1892, something pitiful that the striving and reaching should have ended in the office of Lord-in-Waiting to Victoria.[10]

He wrote little now. The quarter century from Rome to Cambridge

[9]Granville to Canning, August 26, 1857, quoted in Edmond G. Fitzmaurice, *The Life of Granville George Leveson Gower, Second Earl Granville, K.G., 1815-1891* (London, 1905), I, 258.

[10]Mary Drew, *Acton, Gladstone and Others* (London, 1924), 2; Almeric Fitzroy, *Memoirs* (London, n.d.), II, 430–1; George W. Russell, *Portraits of the Seventies* (London, 1916), 131–2.

was largely devoted to the library at Aldenham Hall, to reading and note-taking, to a few miscellaneous papers, two of them preliminary sketches of a part of what he had planned as the History of Liberty. The collection in Shropshire was enormous, better than 60,000 volumes on all manner of subjects. Sir Charles Oman once described the library, the cluttered shelves, the crammed pigeon-holes, the hundreds of boxes of notes, and the references to everything from "early instances of a sympathetic feeling for animals, from Ulysses' old dog in Homer downward" to tribal totems. More and more, it seems, the library and his vague and vast plans became Acton's whole life. The cruelest disaster therefore faced him when he fell on evil days in 1890 and it appeared likely that he would lose his books. Fortunately, however, the library never reached the auctioneer's block. Gladstone had approached Andrew Carnegie about the possibility of saving at least some of the volumes. The Scottish magnate readily responded. For such a collection £9000 was not really very much, but the gesture was magnificent. Acton, of course, never knew who had done this for him. Only Morley, Gladstone, the fabulous Master of Skibo Castle, and one or two others shared the secret. On Acton's death, Carnegie handed the library over to Morley, and he in turn presented it to Cambridge. It was in that splendid and constantly growing collection that the historian worked during the vacant years, brooding and writing those sad letters to Mary Gladstone.[11]

The outstanding feature of this period before Cambridge was probably the founding of the *English Historical Review*. It brought the historian Mandell Creighton and Acton together, and it resulted finally, on the death of Sir John Seeley, in Lord Rosebery's offer of the Regius Professorship. But the appointment came late; Acton was now sixty-one. He seemed pleased enough, but hardly entranced. "It is a most interesting enterprise to me," he wrote Gladstone, "There is, I think, no great school of history there, and not much studious curiosity about it." That there would be difficulties he knew. He was not a professional, and his predecessor Seeley had been of a very different turn of mind. Perhaps too he was very aware of his religion. In the event, Cambridge greeted him, as he put it, not exactly with warmth "but with as friendly a welcome as I could have hoped for," and in fact the years he spent there were to prove highly successful. His lectures were crowded, and some evenings his rooms were filled by the members of the Trinity Historical Society. To his students he was eminently accessible. He took infinite pains to guide their work and he lent them books from his own collection. He offered two courses, one in Modern His-

[11]Charles Oman, *On the Writing of History* (London, 1939), 209.

tory, the other in the French Revolution. But beyond the printed texts of these lectures there is little trace of the Professor. He was caught up in the wheels of university examinations and the organization of the *Cambridge Modern History*, a large co-operative work which was to be "the chart and compass for the coming century." And indeed he had so little time that if he may be said to have founded the Cambridge school of history, it is owing to the plain fact that he was there, and above all to the re-evaluation of his fragmentary written work since his death. The appointment had been very late. Paralysis overtook Acton shortly after he came to Cambridge. The end came at his mother's family home, Tegernsee, Bavaria, in 1902. He was sixty-eight.[12]

For years the legend persisted that Acton wrote nothing at all. Typically, and as might have been expected, he contributed to it himself. "You know how incapable I am of writing in a hurry," he remarked once to Simpson. "I am sure you have confessed to yourself that periodical writing is in truth inconsistent with the sort of studies I have pursued and with my slow and pacific habits of thought." The truth is that he never wrote so much or so fast as when he edited the *Rambler* and the *Review*. The published bulk in book form alone is not inconsiderable. Yet there is also something in Creighton's remark that Acton "is the most learned Englishman now alive, but he never writes anything. . . ." It belongs, however, to the later period, after the Vatican Council. Acton's early work was chiefly the reviews, extended, tightly packed historical commentaries. All that he did later was more profound and reflective, if equally concentrated and fragmentary. The great work on liberty, which he had planned to write from the original sources, never came at all. Despite Acton, however, and despite the legend, enough is known and available to question Oman's judgment that he was "a great researcher and almost became a great historian." Acton was certainly a great historian by anyone's standards. The tragedy of Acton's historical work was that he set his sights higher perhaps than any man might ever hope to achieve. In the realm of history his failure was, in part at least, self-imposed.[13]

Before everything else, he was an historian of ideas; more correctly, of one idea. "The great object," he told Mary Gladstone, "in trying to understand history, political or scientific, is to get behind men and

[12]Acton to Gladstone, Easter Sunday, 1895, in *Correspondence*, 172–3; Acton, *Lectures on Modern History* (London, 1906), Introduction by Figgis and Laurence, xiii.

[13]Acton to Simpson, Dec. 17, 1858, Feb. 1, 1859, in *Lord Acton*, 44, 58; Louise Creighton, *Life and Letters of Mandell Creighton* (London, 1904), I, 275; Oman, *Writing of History*, 208.

grasp ideas. Ideas have a radiation and development, an ancestory and posterity of their own, in which men play the part of godfathers and godmothers more than that of legitimate parents." What he wanted to know was why the old world had descended to ruin, how the doctrine of equality arose, and what its effects had been upon the principles of administration, justice, international law, taxation, representation, property, and religion. It was in all this that Acton differed so greatly from Seeley before him, who had not cared to tackle the impersonal forces which, in Acton's view, ruled the world—ideas such as equality, divine right, and nationality. He thought the historian was charged with extracting the permanent and continuous from the vast mass of shifting evidence. And looking back over the course of the western world, it seemed to him that "Liberty, next to religion, has been the motive of good deeds and the common pretext of crime, from the sowing of the seed at Athens, two thousand four hundred and sixty years ago, until the ripened harvest was gathered by men of our race." Liberty was the core of human history. And yet it was the subject of the greatest confusion and uncertainty. To its discovery and exhibition Acton dedicated much of his work, his thought, and his life.[14]

Certainly his definitions might not be ours. We have come a long way since Acton. Nineteenth-century England has long since dropped below the horizon. "By liberty," he explained, "I mean the assurance that every man shall be protected in doing what he believes his duty against the influence of authority and majorities, custom and opinion." All men were born free, citizens of one universe, children of one God; but they were not born equal. It was this fatal incompatibility of liberty and equality that had ended the golden age of ancient times. "No force that existed could restrain them," Acton wrote of the Athenians; "and they resolved that no duty should restrain them, and that they would be bound by no laws that were not of their own making. In this way the emancipated people of Athens became a tyrant; and their Government, the pioneer of European freedom, stands condemned with a terrible unanimity by all the wisest of the ancients." He thought too that since that time men had been climbing back toward the light, halting, thrown back now and then, but advancing slowly. If the French Revolution was only the most recent and violent example of the disastrous theory of equality, it would be overcome. One day the onward march would be resumed.[15]

Philosophically, Acton's point of view was coterminous with Adam

[14]Acton to Mary Gladstone, March 15, 1880, in *Letters of Lord Acton to Mary, Daughter of the Right Hon. W. E. Gladstone. . . .* (London, 1904), 6, 8; *History of Freedom*, 1–2.

[15]*History of Freedom*, 3, 12, 88.

Smith's. He preached a doctrine of self-reliance and self-denial which, he said, "was written as legibly in the New Testament as in the *Wealth of Nations*. . . ." Above all, he was Burkeian in his appeal to the continuity of past, present, and future, even where he believed that from the end of the ancient world until 1776 the history of freedom was "the history of the thing that was not." And indeed he was inclined to think that it was from America that the plain idea that "men ought to mind their own business and that the nation is responsible to Heaven for the acts of the State,—ideas long locked in the breast of solitary thinkers, and hidden among latin folios,—burst forth like a conqueror upon the world they were destined to transform, under the title of the Rights of Man." Cosmopolitan that he was, Acton could not refrain from feeling that on any view it was the British people and their descendants who had done much of the fighting, thinking, and enduring which had gone toward the great end of delivering man from himself. Yet Acton remained all his life remote from the nationalist glorifications of his predecessor at Cambridge. By background, education, religion alone, he was disqualified from sharing in the narrow prejudices which the nineteenth century fostered and the twentieth would bring to their full and terrible flower.[16]

In Acton's ethical concept of the central thread of human history, then, liberty was bound up with tradition and with the simplest notion of right and wrong. "There is no escape," he said, "from the dogma that history is the conscience of mankind unless for those who reject the collective growth, the canons that rivet the future to the past, and take their stand aloof with Archimedes." All his thought, all his written work, was done in the shadow of this predominant first premise. There was the root of all his paradoxical and severe judgments. It explained his justification of the thirteenth-century Albigensian Crusade of the Church against French heretics while he referred to the charred volume which fell from the neck of the Spanish martyr Servetus, who perished by fire in Calvin's Geneva, as "a ghastly memorial of Reformation ethics." It explained why he considered the French revolutionary leader Mirabeau unfit to trust in daily life and yet the supreme figure of his time. It explained his judgment of Martin Luther's defying Cardinal Cajetan as the action of a barbarian thundering at the gates of the Eternal City, and his challenging the Church and the Holy Roman Empire as "the most pregnant and momentous fact in our history." Finally, it explained even the statement that in certain conditions slavery must be seen as a stage on the road toward freedom. Acton never shrank from paradox, yet he never cultivated it for itself.

[16] *Ibid.*, 28, 55, 59.

By orthodoxy he would not be bound, but he was not heterodox in opinion merely for the sake of being so. A personal code and deep conviction shaped all he wrote and said. But all this only added to his isolation.[17]

For his criteria he suffered as much criticism as any historian ever did. His critics were to be found not only in England; they spread over the Atlantic to the Western Hemisphere also. The affair of his objections to Mandell Creighton's history of the papacy as being too lenient toward incontrovertible vice was possibly the best-known dispute between Acton and another historian. Yet Acton's final reply to Creighton, with the well-known and invariably misquoted dictum, seemed to win over even the dismembered author to his critic's point of view—although Creighton always maintained that Acton would reduce such a history to a mere catalogue of crimes. "Whether Sixtus is infamous or not," Acton had written of the fifteenth-century Pope, "depends on our view of persecution and absolutism. Whether he is responsible or not depends on the ordinary evidence of history. . . . I cannot accept your canon that we ought to judge Pope and King unlike other men, with a favoured presumption that they did no wrong. If there is any presumption, it is the other way, against holders of power, increasing as the power increases. Historic responsibility has to make up for the want of legal responsibility. Power tends to corrupt, and absolute power corrupts absolutely. . . . The inflexible integrity of the moral code is to me the secret of the authority, the dignity, the utility of history." By these utterly unbending standards he judged that if there had been more odious tyrants than the great Louis XIV of France, none had ever used his immense power to do greater wrong. In Acton's opinion, the vast admiration inspired among the most illustrious men of his time by the Sun King denoted simply "the lowest depths to which the turpitude of absolutism has ever degraded the conscience of Europe." This, however, ought to be noted: Acton evaluated and condemned on grounds of political and moral considerations, but his oracular *Obiter dicta* never originated in the discovery of personal and unpleasant idiosyncrasies. Backstairs gossip, the merely odd and curious in history, he enjoyed; probably no one man ever knew more of it. But as the foundation for major judgments on the course of mankind's growth he found it entirely irrelevant. Whether Napoleon or William III was more shameless than Charles II he neither knew nor cared so far as serious historical thought was con-

[17]Acton, *Historical Essays and Studies* (London, 1907), 383; *Lectures on Modern History*, 93, 101, 135; *Lectures on the French Revolution* (London, 1910), 157; *History of Freedom*, 3.

cerned. "The seven deadly sins," he told his friend Lady Blennerhasset, "do not exist for history."[18]

His general view of the nature and purpose of history was simple and conservative. More than that, it was from a twentieth-century point of view naïve. The nineteenth century, as the great modern era of historical writing, was spared the spirit of skepticism and relativism which would come to characterize so much of the following century's historical thought. A Catholic critic said once that Acton was more remarkable for knowledge of detail than for either judgment or intuition. But this was certainly beside the mark if not simply unfair. His judgments were striking, his intuition comparably acute. He viewed the study of history as all-embracing. No province of human activity lay without. And this accounts for his diffused reading habits. He saw history not as literature but as a scientific and exacting study; he had to work from the sources. And yet he was not insensitive to good writing, for there are many fine passages scattered through his work. He judged everything by the canon of the sacredness of human life, and he imagined he could rethink the whole past in the light of this commanding principle, summoning any and every witness to the bar to account for what he had done. He thought mere sincerity was an absolute standard beyond which it was impossible to go, and although he was not unaware of his own particular biases, he was convinced that being cognizant of them he could transcend them. History, he said, had its own moral code; he placed it above all others. There can be no doubt that he ingenuously believed he had discovered it and could illuminate the past by its light. In Acton was an intense conviction that the historian's major obligation was to extract the permanent from the vast mass of evidence. Without doubt he believed he was working steadily toward the isolation of that central dominating thread of historical development which explained the story of life on earth. However fallible all this may seem to this generation, then, there was in it a high seriousness and nobility of conception which elevates Acton into a realm where the purposes of few other historians could ever lead them.

Probably his inaugural lecture at Cambridge in 1895 was the finest single statement of his aims and methods, broad, tolerant, learned (indeed, as printed, immensely, outrageously learned), and human. It was something of a summation and final declaration of faith, a great plea, not for historical learning as such, but for that far rarer achievement, historical understanding. Keenly aware of the significance

[18]Acton to Creighton, n.d., in Creighton, *Life and Letters*, I, 371–2; *History of Freedom*, 49; Acton to Lady Blennerhassett, May, 1877, *Correspondence*, 281–3.

of the occasion, he stood there before his audience, a man of medium height, heavy-set, portly, dignified, speaking eagerly, pointedly in his deep, impressive voice. "I shall never again," he said toward the close of the address, "enjoy the opportunity of speaking my thoughts to such an audience as this. . . ." He wondered whether he could tell them "any neglected truth, any cardinal proposition," which might serve as a final epigraph and target. There was not a single one, but many. "Learn as much by writing as by reading," the Cambridge gathering heard him say; "be not content with the best books; seek sidelights from others; have no favourites; keep men and things apart; guard against the prestige of great names; see that your judgments are your own, and do not shrink from disagreement; no trusting without testing; be more severe to ideas than to actions; do not overlook the strength of the bad cause or the weakness of the good; never be surprised by the crumbling of an idol or the disclosure of a skeleton; judge talent at its best and character at its worst; suspect power more than vice. . . ." It was something worth remembering, all this, a mark to be aimed at; but a mark unlikely in the nature of things ever to be achieved.[19]

For historical studies in England, Acton's influence has generally been accorded to have been great. The plan of the *Cambridge Modern History*, the few years at Trinity College, are usually cited as evidence. Alone, they would hardly be enough. Acton's largest impact was less obvious and more lasting. In much of what he actually did and believed another age could readily see flaws and too much simplicity. His standards were high, but far more rigid than might easily be accepted today. His teleology was closer to the eighteenth century than to the twentieth. He ignored many factors which now seem primary, above all economics and the Industrial Revolution. For all his prescience on the matter of the ruinous course which nationalism would produce, much of the nineteenth century remained a closed book to him. He was guilty of the assumption (which Morris Cohen found characteristic of the whole school of liberal historians) that "men always want freedom and that kings or dictators impose themselves exclusively by force." He embodied all the fine complacencies of the Whig historian. The real impact of Acton upon historical thought and study was made through his ideal; and it was a source of both encouragement and warning. No one ever took a nobler theme, on a grander scale, and attempted to treat it in so firm and sure a manner. It ought not to be forgotten, too, that the Regius Professor was in many ways different from the youthful editor of the *Rambler*. The old harsh

[19]The inaugural is included in his *Lectures on Modern History*, 1–28.

severity had softened with the years. Had he lived longer, he might well have arrived at a still more philosophical and tolerant point of view. "During what was almost our last conversation," said his son after Acton's death, "he solemnly adjured me not to rash-judge others as he had done, but to take care to make allowance for human weakness." In his learning Acton was far and away ahead of all his contemporaries; but he learned to the last. Written history was becoming with him what the twentieth century would call "an act of faith." But it was all too late. The life was over. The ideal was to remain only an ideal.[20]

Perhaps it is foolish to wish there were a greater body of writings left behind. But it has always been inevitable among his friends and among those who never knew him. ". . . I have given two days to inspecting the library at Aldenham," Morley wrote to Carnegie in June, 1902. "To enter that great hall so nobly filled takes my breath away. . . . It has an immense moral in it, and if I were twenty years younger, I would get you to build me a home for the books and I would sit down to draw the said moral, for the instruction of mankind." But it was not, as Morley well knew, a question of twenty years more or less; it was a question only of Acton's having passed out of that hall leaving so much undone. Oman, surveying afterwards the piles of unopened packages that had poured in even after Acton's death, the brown holland sheets, the dust, and "the moths dancing in the pale September sun," was utterly despondent: "I never saw a sight that more impressed on me the vanity of human life and learning." It was almost as if all that life and learning had disappeared off the face of the earth leaving no trace. The Study of Liberty which Granville's friend Lady Camden had so foolishly and admiringly hoped would not be "so clever that nobody will be able to understand it" was scarcely begun. Existing only in the mind, in what form no one knows, it had apparently disintegrated in the sense of futility he once expressed to Mary Gladstone. "My life," he wrote, "is spent in endless striving to make out the inner point of view, the *raison d'être*. . . ." Few had even heard him speak of the work. Lord Bryce, however, was one. He remembered a night in the library at Cannes when Acton spoke intimately and unforgettably of it, "as if, from some mountain high in the air, he saw beneath him the far winding path of human progress from dim Cimmerian shores of prehistoric shadow into the fuller yet broken and fitful light of modern times." One evening on the

[20]Morris R. Cohen, *The Meaning of Human History* (La Salle, Ill., 1947), 270; Acton's son's letter appeared in *The Times* of Oct. 30, 1906, quoted in G. P. Gooch, *History and Historians in the Nineteenth Century* (London, 1913), 393.

Piazzetta in Venice, Mary and Herbert Gladstone listened to Acton on the same theme. But no one ever knew more than this.[21]

Why the history was dropped, then, remains untold. To say he could not make up his mind about the French Revolution, or was inhibited by a continuing loyalty to the Vatican, or had no organizing power is nonsense. If there were any one answer, it would be far more complex, much more obscurely hidden in the man. He remarked once of Döllinger that everyone felt his power to be out of proportion to his work, and that he knew too much to write. But what did this mean, and of whom was he thinking? Compelled to mystery increasingly as he grew older, he withdrew more and more from the world which he must have felt had rejected him—almost as Henry Adams had finally fled into the *Education*. And yet the comparison is hardly exact, Acton being so much that the cynical, disillusioned Adams could never be. Adams lacked all Acton's solid faith and direction. And certainly there had never been any question of choosing between the Virgin and the Dynamo at Aldenham and Cannes. However disillusioned the final years, Adams' connection between Wall Street and the second law of thermodynamics found no parallel in the mind of the Cambridge professor. The retreat to Mont Saint-Michel and Chartres was utterly different from Acton's retreat away from Rome in 1870. But the striving, the seeking, and the futility were similar; and if its origins were different, the ultimate loneliness was the same. "I never," Acton said in later life, "had any contemporaries." Even though he had known so many and loved the life of London not less than he loved his studies, he had always been remote. Lady Mary Monkswell was one of the very few who managed to entice him into talking freely and easily at a social gathering about his family and history, but John Morley remembered chiefly his provoking "talent for silence" and his "mute journey through the courses" of dinner parties. The sense of his being apart, above all the sense of his failure to achieve what he sought, must finally have triumphed in him. Arnold J. Toynbee blamed the influence of industrialism and the unfavourable times Acton lived through. But it was much more personal a matter than that.[22]

[21]Morley to Carnegie, Oct. 4, 1902, in Burton J. Hendrick, *The Life of Andrew Carnegie* (New York, 1932), 361–2; Oman, *Writing of History*, 210; Granville to Canning, Oct. 24, 1857, in Fitzmaurice, *Life of Granville*, I, 262; Acton to Mary Gladstone, January 21, 1881, in *Letters to Mary*, 60; James Bryce, *Studies in Contemporary Biography* (New York, 1903), 396–7.

[22]*Correspondence*, ix; Mary, Lady Monkswell, *A Victorian Diarist: Extracts from the Journals of Mary, Lady Monkswell, 1873-1895* (London, 1944), 158; John Morley, *Recollections* (London, 1917), I, 229–31; Arnold J. Toynbee, *A Study of History* (London, 1934-9), I, 46–7.

Somewhere, lost in the fusion of spiritual and physical loneliness, the uniqueness of the Anglo-Bavarian background, the struggle between faith and obedience, the failures in Parliament, the incongruousness of the search for high office and the attendance at Windsor Castle, lies the secret, which seems unlikely to be recovered. Because of whatever it may be, we have relatively little where so much was promised. It is unlikely that anyone will ever try to write that History of Liberty for him; certainly never in the same manner. It is not a mere matter of the unlikelihood of the appearance of such another store of learning as was Acton's. Perhaps no one today would project such a tremendous study, to be carried out so narrowly around so uncertain a thesis. It belonged to a more secure age which could not even guess at the struggles and horrors following so hard behind. It belonged to the eighteenth or nineteenth century, but not to the twentieth. For time has passed and we have lost something of a former willingness to believe in the inevitable progress of mankind since that June day when Carnegie wrote to Morley: "Well, my Friend, Lord Acton has passed. March! Move on! No stop to that procession."[23]

[23]Carnegie to Morley, June 21, 1902, in Hendrick, *Life of Carnegie*, I, 357.

PEIRCE AND PRAGMATISM*

DAVID SAVAN

Professor Gallie's is the second volume in Pelican's new series in philosophy. In this series, edited by A. J. Ayer, some of the abler of Britain's younger academic generation are studying afresh the history of modern philosophy. The first volume to appear was Stuart Hampshire's *Spinoza*. Projected are books on Butler, Mill, and Locke, by Austin Duncan-Jones, Karl Britton, and D. J. O'Connor. Hampshire and Gallie have set a very high standard. Both books are sound and lucid. Scholars, gentlemen, specialists, and amateurs will find them pleasurable and profitable.

Professor Gallie's book is a valuable contribution to that mutual re-appraisal which is going on today between Britain and the United States. British philosophers hitherto have notoriously not been much impressed by pragmatism, and they have only rarely thought it worth while to devote a book to the study of an American philosopher. The auspices under which this book appears indicate the beginning, at least, of a change in this attitude. What is also remarkable in a British work is the enthusiastic admiration with which Gallie writes of Peirce. To be sure, Peirce deserves nothing less; but that has only recently been recognized by the American philosophic community. Gallie writes critically and judiciously, but he is eager to point out Peirce's originality and profundity. Peirce is, he thinks, at least the equal of Bergson and Whitehead. However, it is going too far to call Peirce, as Gallie does, the greatest logician of the nineteenth century. That title belongs to Gottlob Frege, a man almost as much neglected in his lifetime as Peirce, and for some of the same reasons.

Charles Saunders Peirce is no longer the neglected and misunderstood genius he was in his lifetime. In the 1930's an excellent representative selection from his writings was published, in six volumes, by the Harvard University Press. These *Collected Papers* have provided material for numerous articles, as well as full dress studies of Peirce by Justus Buchler, J. K. Feibleman, and T. A. Goudge. A volume of essays in Peirce's honour is being published by the Harvard University Press this fall. And now we have this Pelican volume. While T. A. Goudge's work remains the best comprehensive and detailed examination of Peirce's thought, this latest book, an able and interesting analysis in its own right, will introduce Peirce to the intelligent general public which has as yet scarcely heard of him.

**Peirce and Pragmatism.* By W. B. GALLIE. Harmondsworth: Penguin Books [Montreal: Riverside Books]. 1952. Pp. 247. 65c.

The disjointed character of Peirce's life and the fact that, alone among major philosophers, he wrote not even one book, invite each student to crumble him into fragments which are then reassembled into two or more distinct clusters of ideas. In this way several conflicting tendencies in Peirce's thought have been identified. Gallie, however, is concerned to make out the organic unity which animates Peirce's pragmatism with a force and significance superior to the better-known pragmatism of William James. Peirce's central thesis is, according to Gallie, "that every symbol—be it a word, a sentence, or a scientific formula—is essentially something *to be developed*." There is no doubt that this is one of Peirce's leading principles. From it he draws the consequence that no symbol has meaning apart from a language or a universe of symbols. His pragmatic principle that the meaning of an hypothesis lies in our conception of its possible verifiable consequences is a corollary. So too is his definition of a true belief as that one which the community of science approaches as the ideal limit of its investigations. Gallie shows with ingenuity and clarity how this evolutionary view of symbolism unifies Peirce's theory of knowledge, his metaphysics, and his cosmology. He argues also that this leading principle results in an important ambiguity in Peirce's pragmatism.

It is a mistake, however, to suppose, as Gallie does, that this evolutionary theory of symbolism is closer to the centre of Peirce's thought than a number of other leading principles. These may be more easily made out if we consider briefly the philosophical influences which Peirce took up into his thinking. During the fifties and sixties, while Peirce was a young student, there were two strong schools of philosophy well established in American academic life, and two others rather less respectable. The older of the respectable schools was the Scottish philosophy of Common Sense, founded by Reid and Stewart, and with its American missionary headquarters in Princeton and Presbyterianism. The other academic school was Idealism, inspired by Kant, Hegel, and their slightly bohemian American stepchild, Transcendentalism. Both Idealism and Common Sense were stronger supporters of the accepted moral and religious order. The two *parvenus* were the empiricism of Stuart Mill and the evolutionary ideas of Spencer and Darwin. These two movements were identified with the sciences rather than with religion. Now Peirce was practically alone among American philosophers of his time in the solidity of his training in mathematics and the natural sciences. Although he calls himself an Idealist and a Common Sensist, he accepts these philosophies only after divorcing them from religion and remarrying them with science. As to empiric-

ism and evolutionism, already wedded to science, Peirce led them down the primrose path towards a bigamous union with mathematical logic. It was this interplay of divorce and bigamy which gave to Peirce's thought some of its unique features, and was also in considerable part responsible for its unpopularity in an age which respected nothing more than respectability.

In terms of this complex genealogical tree we can say that Gallie has singled out for emphasis Peirce's logical evolutionism. But quite as central in Peirce's thought is his empiricism, which leads him to emphasize the importance of observation and experimentation in logic, mathematics, and religion. Peirce's Common Sensism leads him to make a crucial distinction between those perceptions and beliefs which are subject to critical control and doubt, and those which are forced upon us willy-nilly. His Idealism leads him to the view that not only all of our mental activities (including perception, emotion, and volition), but the entire universe is a complex symbolic system, developing toward what he called "concrete reasonableness." Other central theses could also be found. Gallie has, however, chosen well that leading theme which lends itself most readily, in his capable hands, to a straightforward exposition and criticism of Peirce's pragmatism and metaphysics.

There are some general features of the new Pelican series upon which it might be useful to comment. There is a new orthodoxy in English philosophy, now to be illustrated in its application to popular studies in the history of philosophy. Apparently, very few philosophical essays can hope to find a friendly reception in England today unless their method is the analysis of language developed by Wittgenstein, or that logical grammar which is Ryle's brilliant adaptation. One very pleasant consequence, well suited to the purposes of this series, is the refreshingly easy and familiar style to which philosophers are stimulated. It is as if one were invited, after a pleasant dinner, to join an urbane circle in some intelligent and bracing conversation. In addition to the shop-worn philosophical illustrations—the round red apple, the horse, the table, and the white sheet of paper now glaring at me—we are introduced to instances of subtle shifts in usage, or to snippets of talk of different kinds, sometimes fatuous, sometimes paradoxical, sometimes witty.

There is little of the traditional emotional animus of the empiricist against metaphysics. It too is invited to become a gentlemanly member of the conversational circle. The authors seem to bear in mind Wittgenstein's polite remark that it is a mistake to deny what a philosopher says. Instead, we are asked what it would mean for this metaphysical

sentence or that to be false. And what would it mean for it to be true? The answer seems to be that although it doesn't mean very much to say that a metaphysical system is true, it would be rather a pity—and, besides, wouldn't mean much more—to say that it is false. Hampshire thinks that metaphysics arises quite naturally through our imaginative tendency to extend the use of certain ordinary but pervasive linguistic forms and expressions into quite extra-ordinary areas. Hampshire and Gallie agree that metaphysics may suggest and inspire broad lines of interest and investigation. Metaphysics may still be the Queen of the Sciences—but she is now a British Queen. She moves her subjects by her presence and her splendour. Her beauty, wit, and charm inspire us. But only the unenlightened suppose that her power extends to the resolution of specific disputes.

Almost more interesting than anything else about this new series are its implicit assumptions about the philosophical public. To pay their way at such a low price these books must have a fairly large sale. Are there then so many people interested in reading about philosophers and philosophy? Is this hypothetical mass audience willing to give up philosophy's consolations (her "soup kitchens," as Peirce emends Boethius) in return for metaphysics in the grand old manner and epistemology in the new analytic manner? Are these readers in their thousands prepared to give up expositions like Will Durant's, sugared over with a pale cast of thought, in favour of precise logical dissection? Do such people really exist in large numbers? Philosophers will watch this new venture hopefully, with something more than academic interest.

STRUGGLE FOR EUROPE* — M. R. POWICKE

The Struggle for Europe is now established as an outstandingly popular and provocative book. It is widely, though not universally, acknowledged as the best war history yet to have appeared. Nor are the reasons for this dual achievement far to seek, for Mr. Wilmot not only writes a gripping, well-told story, but combines with his unusual skill in narrative both a marvellous power of lucid analysis and a serious historian's ability in the handling of sources.

These formidable gifts are used by the author to reconstruct and analyse the allied reoccupation of Europe in 1944 and 1945. For good measure, he has included a less detailed sketch of those events from 1939 to 1944 which throw light on his main theme, and two contro-

**The Struggle for Europe*. By CHESTER WILMOT. London and Toronto: Collins. 1952. Pp. 766. $5.00.

versial political chapters at the end which are respectively entitled "Roosevelt and the Balkans," and "Stalin's Greatest Victory."

Like any historian, Mr. Wilmot writes with the advantage of "hindsight." Like any good historian, he writes with an argument, or thesis, which his narrative is designed to sustain. His book has received much unfair criticism for the mere existence of these qualities. The question which the general reader wants answered is whether the advantage of hindsight is unfairly exploited, and whether the thesis is sound, or at least logical (for it would surely be absurd to expect a generally acceptable thesis so soon after the event).

Mr. Wilmot's book actually has two theses, one military and the other political (though its riches are by no means exhausted by them). They are both brilliantly, but perhaps one-sidedly argued. The result is that, in what we may crudely resolve into the debate between British and American viewpoints, the former wins all the battles, the latter only the skirmishes. Thus the Americans learned military lessons quicker, exploited victories faster, were superior tacticians, besides having the better-known advantages of technical skill and material weight. But they were strategically simple-minded and politically naïve. We can ignore the skirmishes here, though no doubt many an ante-room will get cloudier as they are discussed. What of the battles? To further simplify Mr. Wilmot's refined argument, they are justifications of Montgomery and Churchill respectively. He undoubtedly goes a long way towards establishing the former's strategic wisdom against his many American critics. This strategy can be boiled down to three major tenets (see pp. 336–41, 458 ff., 489, etc.): first, the need to unbalance the enemy's defences by preliminary manœuvring; secondly, the concentration of effort in a single sharp thrust against the most vital part of the unbalanced defences (i.e. most vital from the point of view of further development); thirdly, the maintenance of adequate reserves for the final "heave" and follow-through. To apply these principles, in turn, involved a strong over-all command. Opposed to them were the American generals' preference for an all-out attack with everything available, or strategy as "applied logistics," which stemmed from their sense of superiority in *materiel* and manpower; and their abhorrence of a rigid hierarchy of command. This military thesis is brilliantly, if not always convincingly, sustained in an analysis of the campaigns from Normandy on, in which a vast range of sources, from surviving minutes of Hitler's conferences to brigade diaries, are employed.

This British preference for the "indirect approach" also led to conflict with the Americans over the question of a Balkan front. And in

this case, Mr. Wilmot's military argument is reinforced by his political thesis. Here the contrary theme of Stalin's political victory over Roosevelt creeps into the book, and Churchill's greater foresight is vigorously argued. But Mr. Wilmot is forced to be too dogmatic by the limitations of space. He might well have kept this subject for another book. He probably assigns too much weight to the admittedly startling evidence of American suspicions of British imperialism in the formation of American policy. He rightly stresses Churchill's superior judgment with regard to Russia. But Roosevelt's views were those of most of the Western world, including utopia-minded Britain. In this regard, Churchill had all the advantages of a conservative realist with an eighteenth-century ancestry. And the nature of the countermeasures he is said to have proposed may suggest to some readers that he had some of the disadvantages too.

AMERICAN DIALECTS*

CHARLES W. DUNN

Professor Kurath's handsome and agreeably inexpensive *Word Geography* is an important by-product of the collaboration of linguists who have undertaken to map all the dialects of the United States and Canada. The 734 maps of the *Linguistic Atlas of New England* (1939-43) published by Professor Kurath have already presented in detail the phonetic and lexical variations of New England speech (and that of New Brunswick) recorded by highly trained field-workers.

The 163 maps in the present volume are based upon a similar survey of the 50 million people now living in the entire eastern United States between Maine and Georgia—an area extending as far west as Cleveland, Ohio, and including the outer limits of American settlements (except Kentucky) reached by the end of the seventeenth century. The information is based upon exhaustive and systematic records of the speech of more than 1200 carefully chosen informants. Each county is represented by one old-fashioned, unschooled informant and one middle-class, schooled informant; and each city also by at least one cultured speaker.

The *Word Geography* is of primary interest and importance to linguists and to students of regional history and culture; but, since it is restricted to word usage and does not deal with the complexities of phonetic variations, it can be readily appreciated by that large body of non-specialists who make a hobby of identifying North American dialects.

**A Word Geography of the Eastern United States.* By HANS KURATH. Studies in American English, I. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press [Toronto: Burns & MacEachern]. 1949. Pp. xii, 88, 163. $5.25.

Professor Kurath shows the distribution of more than 400 regional and local words and their relationship to regional and local areas. Thus, besides the nationally known term "seesaw," now widespread in urban centres, the regional term "teeter" (or "teeter-board") survives in some large regions; and in some localities various early Colonial terms such as "tinter," "dandle," and "tilt" have not yet disappeared.

He indicates the divisions separating various usages by isoglosses drawn on a series of identical base maps (figs. 2–43) and shows the distribution of forms in detail on a further series of maps (figs. 44–163).

Professor Kurath's previous studies have been of particular importance in indicating the manner in which dialect survivals may reveal earlier migrations of settlers. In his introduction to the present volume, among other contributions, he demonstrates conclusively that American dialects are not sharply divided into Northern and Southern by the Mason-Dixon Line. It is actually true that the well-known phrase "you-all" (figs. 30, 114) stops abruptly on the southern border of the "free state" of Pennsylvania, but other lexical isoglosses indicate the existence of an extensive Midland speech area. This finding gains confirmation, it may be added, from Professor C. K. Thomas's *Introduction to the Phonetics of American English* (1947), where, on the basis of some 7,000 speech-records, a somewhat similar regional division of phonetic isoglosses is indicated (pp. 142 ff.).

Professor Kurath's book has the additional merit of inviting further interpretations. One might, for instance, attempt to explain the rare form "swiveltree" (p. 13) as a "semantic accident"—to use Gilliéron's approach—produced in the borderland between the conflicting forms "swingletree" and "whiffletree"; and "teedle-board" as a product of "teeter-board" and "dandle."

The few objections that may be raised about the *Word Geography* are trivial. The base map should show the state line between Vermont and New Hampshire and, at least in figure 1, should name the various states represented, since not all interested readers will be familiar with the eastern United States. On all the maps two small circular marks intended to represent topographic features, one on the Niagara River and the other opposite Cape Ann, are unfortunately similar to the circular symbols sometimes used to indicate the occurrence of words. The top line of page 71 should read "Irish Gaelic *clabar*."

The author should, moreover, have indicated on the individual maps the form or forms which appear on each side of each isogloss and those which appear on the other, and he should have explained more fully on what basis he drew his isoglosses. The "whiffletree" isogloss,

for instance, is not quite the same in all three maps, figures 4, 5a, and 5b, and does not seem to tally very clearly with the actual word distribution indicated on the detailed map, figure 77. Nor does the distribution of the term "saddle horse" (meaning "near horse") as indicated on figure 110 seem to warrant the speech islands indicated on figure 24.

It is greatly to be hoped that the sight of the blank white space which is Canada in the *Word Geography* will arouse Canadian scholars to collaborate in the further collection of Canadian speech, about which so little is known. Canadian investigators, such as Professor Henry Alexander of Queen's University, at present fall into the category of notable and, one might almost say, lonely exceptions.

SCIENTISM AND MODERN HISTORY* — H. M. ESTALL

Scientism, according to Professor Owen, is the cult of science, the worship of science, the conversion of proper principles of evidence into dogma. Professor Owen respects and approves the work of the scientist, but warns him and his followers against the sin of pride. Science, like charity, is not puffed up; but there is a worship of science which makes for it extravagant claims, which is expansionist in its desire to invest alien fields and unmindful of the authentic claims of other ways to wisdom.

Four principles are said to be implicit in scientific procedure: its methods are empirical and these necessarily limit the beliefs which can be admitted as scientific; it is restricted to those aspects or kinds of reality which are measurable; the goal of all scientific enquiry is the formulation of general laws; and lastly science makes no claim to finality, but is tentative and self-correcting. With these regulative principles Professor Owen has no quarrel; but when they are converted into dogmas grave trouble ensues. Empiricism then rejects all scientifically unverifiable beliefs as meaningless or worthless; the success of measurement gives rise to a materialistic identification of the physical as "the only kind of reality that we can genuinely come to know"; the mechanical or deterministic principle leads to a denial of the reality of freedom; and the progressive temper of science leads to secular utopianism.

The body of the book is devoted to an historical account of the various ways in which one or other of these dogmatic distortions of scientific principles have led to pernicious errors concerning man and

**Scientism, Man, and Religion.* By D. R. G. OWEN. Philadelphia: The Westminster Press [Toronto: The Ryerson Press]. 1952. Pp. 208. $3.50.

society—to the "economic man" of Marxism, the "faceless man" of Nazi barbarism, the "hollow man" of bourgeois capitalism. This indictment of scientism is followed by a concluding chapter looking towards "the reconciliation of science and religion . . . in terms of the Christian faith."

The author has many perceptive and thought-provoking things to say about the history of ideas and their connection with social movements. His thesis works a pattern into this historical material, even though the material is sometimes refractory. Space permits dissent on two counts only, one as to the limits of science, the other as to the account of "naturalism."

History has a way of confounding those (Kant included) who undertake to fix the boundaries of science. One can indeed point out that there are limits, in the sense that the scientist does not yet know many things he would like to know and hopes one day to know. One can also, though with more diffidence, indicate limitations ingredient in the very methods of science. But the trouble here is to determine the essentials of scientific method. Is the scientist, for instance, necessarily limited to investigation of the measurable aspects of things? Aside from the danger of holding that what today eludes measurement will always do so, one is confronted with a very great deal of scientific work, wherein there appears to be little or no emphasis on or concern with measurement. As between psychometrics and psychoanalysis, for instance, one can scarcely call the one scientific because it measures and the other unscientific because it fails to do so. Preoccupation with the measurable may indeed have led some scientists and some philosophers in the direction of physicalism. Professor Owen is right to condemn the "nothing-but" fallacy so committed. But the scientist is not obliged to say: "We cannot operate where we cannot measure" any more than he is entitled to say: "What cannot be measured does not exist." He may perforce be content to observe and to order. This is still science, though on a more modest scale. At any rate, it is not poetry or religion.

This is not to argue with Professor Owen about the value of art, literature, and religion as expressions of the human spirit, but rather to suggest that one corrective to scientism, which he deplores, may simply be more and better science, which he respects. Even so, the scientist is surely bound to claim for his beliefs, not only that they are scientific, but also that they are true. Professor Owen construes the empirical principle of science as simply defining the nature of scientific beliefs, but saying "nothing about the possibility of other methods or the validity of other classes of beliefs." This imposes too self-denying an ordinance on science. Anthropology rejects the Aryan mythology

of Rosenberg. Astronomy is not silent about astrology. It displaces the methods of the astrologer and disputes the validity of his beliefs. Science may not be the only avenue to true beliefs, but its modesty ought not to go to the length of acquiescing in the validity of beliefs inconsistent with its own. Otherwise it must lead to the relativism and skepticism Professor Owen so deplores.

As to the chapters on naturalism and nazism, some of the interpretations and inferences are surprising. To begin with, it is at least "paradoxical" (the author's own adjective) to find Rousseau, *malgré lui*, among those charged with any kind of scientism. Rousseau's naturalism seems to have the most tenuous of connections with science or scientism. Rousseau's error, according to Professor Owen, was that instead of attacking "the predominance of science in the name of religion or of reason in some higher form . . . he led the insurrection by raising the flag of nature." The judgment is revealing, for it suggests that Professor Owen must somehow include all the enemies of true religion among the blind worshippers of science. Not only Hobbes, but Rousseau; not only communists, but nazis.

The case against Freud is as one-sidedly drawn as that against Rousseau, though in an inverted way. It is relatively easy to move from *The Social Contract* to the Nazi state, but very difficult to show the connection between either and scientism. It is relatively easy to convict Freud of undue faith in scientific reason, but very difficult to show that Freud, albeit unwittingly, aided and abetted the brief triumph of Hitler. That Professor Owen manages to do this is due, I think, chiefly to a confusion in his own account of the matter. Nazism there appears, in the passages cited from Freud, both as the inevitable aftermath in case Freud's faith in scientific reason should prove unwarranted, and as itself a form of scientism. Either way, scientism wins. Surely scientism, in Professor Owen's version of modern history, has become a hydra with too many heads, all ugly.

SHORTER NOTICES

History of Syria Including Lebanon and Palestine. By PHILIP K. HITTI. New York: The Macmillan Company [Toronto: The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited]. 1951. Pp. xxvi, 749. $11.50.

In this, his latest volume, Professor Hitti has again placed scholarship in his debt for painstakingly assembling a vast body of factual material in a convenient compass. However, to those who, like the reviewer, have had occasion to use his earlier *History of the Arabs* as

a textbook in their classes in Islamic history, the book under review will probably be a distinct disappointment, for it fails in certain ways to maintain the standard set by its predecessor.

The title-page informs us that this is a *History of Syria Including Lebanon and Palestine*. This is surely a peculiarly broad definition of the geographical area commonly referred to as Syria. This area, during the course of its long history, was dominated by all the great peoples of the ancient world, each of whom left indelible traces. It cannot fail, then, to be of interest to all historians. Moreover, it let loose spiritual forces of far-reaching significance which gave rise to two world religions.

The panorama of history which Mr. Hitti presents to us sweeps from the Old Stone Age down to the present time. On a canvas of such large dimensions, it is inevitable that the resulting picture will be criticized for faulty perspective. The historian of the medieval or modern Islamic world will feel that much of importance has been glossed over or omitted; the student of the ancient Orient will be dissatisfied with the treatment of the earlier period, and crave a greater proportion of space. Since the present reviewer belongs to the latter group, he naturally regards it as disproportionate that three chapters and part of a fourth out of a total of fifty must suffice to trace the history and cultural contributions of so significant a people as the Hebrews. However, this situation but reflects the author's own interests.

The early sections of the book are extremely valuable for their use of the latest archaeological and epigraphic materials, although it is unfortunate that the author fails to document this section adequately, especially with regard to archaeological literature. Not a few controversial hypotheses, such as the henotheism of Moses and David, or the Sinaitic origin of the Phoenician alphabet, are presented as statements of fact with no discussion of the reasons for the position taken or, at the very least, adequate references to discussions of the subject. On the other hand, comparison reveals that the later parts of the volume are little more than a rewriting of the relevant material, complete with footnotes, from the author's earlier *History of the Arabs*.

The format and printing of the book is similar to that of the latter volume, and consequently shares its merits in this regard. It is, however, not entirely free from blemishes. The photograph of an Ugaritic tablet on p. 119 is upside down. There are several inaccuracies, some of which are undoubtedly typographical errors or mere *lapsus calami*; for instance Jegartshadutha for Jegarsahadutha (p. 164, n. 6), *yisre-'el* for *yisra-'el* (p. 177, n. 5), *yasaph* for *yoseph* (p. 177, n. 8). Mr. Hitti's etymologies are not always reliable, for example page 145,

note 1, where it should be pointed out that the Egyptian word for plough is *hb* (Coptic *hebi*), the Sumerian is apin and the Akkadian loanword from the latter, *epennu*. The linguistic equation of the Egyptian and Mesopotamian words is highly dubious. Again, on page 128, note 1, he states that the Egyptian name Khuru was "a corruption of Hurrian." On the contrary, it is the normal Egyptian writing of the name of the country Khurru; one might as well call Italy a corruption of Italia!

Mr. Hitti is primarily a philologist, not an historian. He is at his best in gathering data from written sources and presenting his readers with a most impressive collection of facts. But facts by themselves can be tedious, and the task of the historian is more than that of a mere collector. In this sense Mr. Hitti is not a true historian, for in this volume, as indeed in his *History of the Arabs*, he loses himself in a mass of detail, and fails to paint his canvas with bold, sweeping strokes of the brush. We should like to know the interpretation of the facts in broader lines; the underlying movements and forces at work; the wider significance and interrelation of the facts presented. This surely is essential to true historiography.

RONALD J. WILLIAMS

Soviet Russian Literature, 1917-50. By GLEB STRUVE. Norman, Okla.: University of Oklahoma Press [Toronto: Burns & MacEachern]. 1951. Pp. xviii, 414. $6.25.

To many, or perhaps to the vast majority, of English-speaking readers, Soviet Russian literature is still a puzzle, if not a completely unknown entity. Yet some remarkably talented writers have appeared (and often disappeared, alas!) during the last thirty-five years following the Bolshevik revolution of November 7, 1917. Some of their works are obtainable in English translations, but the bulk of their output is still available only in Russian. Hence, to those who are interested in learning something of the tribulations, hopes, and despairs of Russian writers under the Soviet régime this book will prove to be an invaluable guide and an important and fairly impartial source of information.

Mr. Struve, who is Professor of Russian literature at the University of California at Berkeley, has spent a lifetime in the study of Soviet letters. His first book on Soviet Russian literature appeared in 1935 and this is a third and much enlarged revision of it. Although an avowed anti-communist, Mr. Struve declares that he has done his best "to consider Soviet literature as objectively as possible, and to consider it, above all, as literature" (p. x). And in this he is, perhaps, right so

far as his own conscience is concerned, but he was unable (as any literary critic or historian knows only too well) to avoid the pitfalls of personal—conscious or subconscious—likes and dislikes. After all, Mr. Struve's upbringing and literary tastes preclude the possibility of objectivity in judging Soviet Russian literature, since he has to apply different (and I would say, Western) standards to the evaluation of a field of letters in a country which by an unprecedented upheaval has been thrown back to the times of Ivan the Terrible, in the expression of Boris Pilniak, one of the ablest earlier writers of Soviet Russia. Hence, it would have been fairer to the reader and to himself had Mr. Struve courageously confessed his lack of objectivity in the first place, since he will be condemned anyway by communist and pro-communist critics no matter how he tries to prove his objectivity.

The book presents an extensive analysis of the different phases in the development and regression of Soviet Russian literature from the early revolutionary romanticism through the emergence of a truly new literature during the late twenties to the gradual strangulation of literature by the party and the state, its present condition, after a brief patriotic revival during World War II. In this kind of survey, Mr. Struve succeeds admirably as a literary historian, but he is on less firm ground when he speaks as a literary critic. Here he exhibits didacticism and pedantry which are not only annoying but often boring. And while not criticizing the method of describing the contents of works in a foreign literature, one is likely to question the wisdom of doing so (and often at length) for novels available in English translation.

At times Mr. Struve is carried away by what the *New Yorker* calls "infatuation with one's own words," as when, for instance, writing about Isaac Babel, whom he calls a "brilliant representative of the romantic period in Soviet literature" (p. 68), he repeats the words erotic, eroticism, sensuous, and sensuousness six times in the course of less than two pages of text. One is apt to criticize also Mr. Struve's extensive use of Gallicisms when proper English words are available, and at times his incorrect translations, such as "lancers" instead of "fusilliers" for *strelkovy* (p. 112), "lawfulness" instead of "conformity to law" for *zakonomernost* (p. 284), "the primrose path" instead of "the path of flowers" for *doroga tsvetov* (p. 181), etc. These errors are surprising for a bilingual author.

Notwithstanding all these shortcomings, Mr. Struve's book is a valuable reference work on the controversial subject of Soviet Russian literature, and as such will fill a hitherto existing gap.

LEONID I. STRAKHOVSKY

Thomas Mann. By HENRY HATFIELD. The Makers of Modern Literature. Norfolk, Conn.: New Directions Books. 1951. Pp. xii, 179. $2.00.

It would have seemed incredible forty years ago that the author of *Buddenbrooks* and the earlier novellas, that quintessential German, Thomas Mann, should ever flee his own country and embrace Americanism, the complete embodiment of the "Zivilisation" denounced so severely in his *Non-Political Reflections*. Strange that the Americans should have been able to take to their hearts the most introverted of all writers! Professor Hatfield, like others before him, points to the self-centredness of Mann in his repeated treatments of the artist in society during the period before 1914. It might perhaps be claimed with equal justice that even in his later works he has never been able to abandon the dissection of his own personality:

> Mann, know thyself, presume not God to scan;
> The proper study of mankind is Mann!

In all the longer novels, *The Magic Mountain*, the *Joseph* series, and *Dr. Faustus*, there are characters which are obviously in large part the author himself; and in *The Beloved Returns* the long interior monologue of Goethe contains a large element which would come more naturally and convincingly from the lips of Mann himself.

Professor Hatfield has discharged a difficult task extremely well. He gives a very clear and straightforward account of Mann's development as an artist. He gives illuminating analyses of the major works and has good things to say about the author's use of symbol, *leit-motif*, and other devices. At the same time the changes in political thought are traced, so that we are enabled to understand the transition from a decided nationalism and a respect for authoritarian government to internationalism and sympathy with democracy. All this Professor Hatfield does with both fairness and honesty, and the result is a more balanced view of Mann than we can find elsewhere. Much that has been written on the subject during the past fifteen years or so has been mere strident praise, uncritical and uninformative. This book is bold enough to point to weaknesses, such as the frequent repetitiveness and obscurities which result from too great "thoroughness." There is something also on the extreme difficulty of adequately translating the works. Here, indeed, Professor Hatfield might well have gone further. The inadequacy of the versions of some of the later works is such as to make us curious to know how they can have appealed to the selectors of the book clubs. For all its brilliant patches, it is difficult to imagine how *Dr. Faustus* can mean much to a wider public. Professor Hatfield evidently feels this, with his strictures on its "annoyingly

obvious" erudition and his statement that "there is something to discourage almost every reader." Perhaps he would not dissent from the view that, after all, it is *Buddenbrooks* and some of the novellas, such as *Tonio Kröger, Death in Venice*, and *Mario and the Magician*, which have the best prospects of survival.

C. LEWIS

The Forrestal Diaries. Edited by WALTER MILLIS, with the collaboration of E. S. DUFFIELD. New York: The Viking Press [The Macmillan Company of Canada Limited]. 1951. Pp. xxiv, 581. $7.00.

Shortly after James Forrestal became Secretary of the Navy in 1944 he began to dictate a diary, which he kept up intermittently until he resigned as Secretary of Defense early in 1949. Like most diaries it was not intended for publication; after his death, however, it was decided to present it to the public in an abridged form after screening by the Department of Defense. Whatever may be the propriety of such a course, it cannot be denied that the resultant book affords many fascinating glimpses behind the scenes of recent policy formulation in the United States.

The diary reveals to us a man of conservative political temperament, never a New Dealer or Fair Dealer, who strove unceasingly to assure the military security of the United States. As early as 1945 he was doubtful of the wisdom of destroying Germany and Japan, thereby creating political vacuums in Europe and Asia into which Soviet Russia might move. In this period he saw more clearly than did most Americans that the post-war world would be dangerous and troubled, and that the breakneck demobilization of the American armed forces was a disastrous event. He was appalled by the confusion and lack of planning that characterized the Washington scene in these years. Accordingly, he bent every effort to build up the American military establishment, working against the advocates of economy both in the Congress and in the White House. He encouraged the formation of planning agencies, especially the National Security Council, in the hope that foreign and military policies would result from intelligent and realistic calculation rather than from confused reaction to each new external event. (Canadians will be interested in the envy with which Forrestal viewed the smooth working of cabinet government during a visit he made to Ottawa.) He worked long and hard to secure the unification of the armed services, without surrendering to the ambitions of either the Army or the Air Force. He sought, unsuccess-

fully, to retire the Palestine issue from American domestic politics, and became intensely unpopular in some circles for his efforts.

Although Forrestal admired the cabinet system of government as practised in Britain and Canada, he must have realized that cabinet ministers have to be politicians who run for election. But this man was never prepared to be a politician; perhaps that is why his hide was never sufficiently toughened to withstand the bitter controversies that eventually enveloped and destroyed him. He lived long enough, however, to see a general acceptance of policies that he had once urged in almost lonely isolation.

G. M. CRAIG

Positivism: A Study in Human Understanding. By RICHARD VON MISES. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press [Toronto: S. J. Reginald Saunders and Company Limited]. 1951. Pp. xii, 404. $8.00.

This book is a translation with certain revisions of Professor von Mises' *Kleines Lehrbuch des Positivismus* published at The Hague in 1939. The author is a philosophically minded mathematician, well known for his contributions to statistics and the theory of probability. Prior to World War II he taught in several European universities, and is now Gordon McKay Professor of Aerodynamics and Applied Mathematics at Harvard. The present book is not a treatise about positivism, but rather a comprehensive account "for the open-minded educated man" of how the world looks to one who is prepared to call himself a positivist. The discussion covers a range of topics extending all the way from logical grammar, axiomatics, and the structure of physical theories to history, art, metaphysics, and religion. The writing is throughout extremely lucid, and while the translation is in spots unidiomatic, the work as a whole represents a piece of philosophic popularization on a high level.

Like most labels, "positivism" can be more misleading than helpful if it is applied indiscriminately. Critics often lump together the doctrines of Comte, Mach, Wittgenstein, and Carnap under this label. But in fact these men see eye to eye on comparatively few subjects. Professor von Mises' positivism likewise possesses its unique features, and is less radical than much that goes by the same name in contemporary philosophy. Thus while he agrees with logical positivists in stressing the importance of linguistic precision and the necessity of anchoring knowledge in sense-experience, he is not prepared to dismiss non-scientific discourse as meaningless. "For us, metaphysics is

not nonsense, poetry is not superfluous, the fine arts and music are legitimate forms of communication among men" (p. 8). Accordingly, "the sciences" and "the humanities" are complementary to one another, not rivals. Both domains require of those who investigate them similar intellectual qualities—the capacity for straight thinking, the striving for clarity and objectivity, the respect for and sensitivity to what experience teaches. Hence, Professor von Mises regards as an "antipositivist" anyone who holds (*a*) that there exists an area in which human reason is wholly incompetent to function, and (*b*) that there are truths which cannot be shaken by any experience, past or future. To all who accept such beliefs, the author shows himself vigorously opposed. Some traditional metaphysicians are thus inevitably consigned to outer darkness.

In presenting the details of his position, Professor von Mises exhibits a wide acquaintance with the sciences, philosophy, and literature. Even specialists will find his comments stimulating, not to say provocative. The main defect of the book—no doubt unavoidable in view of its purpose—is a superficiality in the treatment of particular issues. But as a "*kleines Lehrbuch*" it can be warmly recommended.

T. A. GOUDGE

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